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DAYS AND NIGHTS
WITH
INDIAN BIG GAME



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SAMBHUR.

DAYS AND NIGHTS

WITH

INDIAN BIG GAME

BY
MAJOR-GENERAL A. E. WARDROP

AUTHOR OF "MODERN PIG-STICKING"

WITH CHAPTERS BY
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OF GARSTEAD, BILLIGIRUNGUMS, MYSORE

ILLUSTRATED WITH PHOTOGRAPHS
AND WITH SKETCHES BY

MAJOR J. H. NORTON
(LATE THE CARABINIERS)

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TO
MY WIFE

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

“ALL things being full of flaw, all things being full of holes, the strength of all things is in shortness,” quoth the great John Ridd, in 750 pages of *Lorna Doone*.

We will try to follow his precepts if not his example.

After a bison shoot in 1921 it was my good fortune to be the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Morris, at their estate in the Billigirungums. I was struck with their fine trophies and by Mr. Morris's experiences, especially those relating to shooting tiger on foot.

At my persuasion Mr. Morris has written some of his experiences in this book. I offer him my grateful thanks.

My own recollections have been drawn either from diaries or from accounts written at the time to friends.

These pages deal frankly with what a recent writer calls “a stale line,” recording “the delights of Forest life, its beautiful surroundings and adventurous incidents.”

But we hope that they may be read and found fresh when older and better pre-war books are

looked on by a young generation as no longer applicable to post-war conditions.

In spite of the modern rifle, sport in India is now very good. In the war no game was shot. Since then there are considerably fewer Army men shooting than before; and it is permissible to doubt whether our civilian brothers, engrossed in 'reforms' and all that they involve, will have as much time as before for tours in their districts, knowledge of their people, and the freedom of the jungle.

Yet few will deny to the jungle, as well as to a horse, its value in teaching a youngster (be he civilian or soldier) self-reliance, a knowledge of the language and of the country as well as of the inhabitants, and various other virtues.

My own shooting experiences are small compared with those of the great hunters of the past and present day. Moreover, I have had largely to record my own failures. I can only hope they will teach beginners as much as they taught me.

In consequence I have made no attempt to preach or deduce maxims except in the matter of sitting up and one or two other important points. But a commentary on reasons for failure or success runs throughout the book.

For the natural history of the animals, the methods of hunting them, and for advice in general, reference must be made to the classical Indian Big Game books, beginning with Sanderson and Forsyth down to the latest *Shikar Notes for Novices* by the Hon. Mr. Best.

This book is not a catalogue of animals shot. Mr. Morris and I have tried to mention only

incidents that would bring out some point of interest, however small.

Various big game experiences of my own have been published in *Modern Pig-sticking*, and do not appear here.

This book owes much to my wife's criticism and help.

I wish to express my gratitude to Major J. H. Norton, artist and hunter of big game, for his illustrations.

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CHAPTER II

SOME PRE-WAR TIGER SHOOTS

“ Tiger, tiger, burning bright,
In the forests of the night.
What immortal hand or eye
Framed thy fearful symmetry ? ”

I HAVE devoted considerable space in this book to tiger. For, to my mind there is a romance and a devilishness about a tiger possessed by no other Indian animal. To meet and overcome a tiger is probably the first great ambition of every young big game hunter, and the scope and variety of action of this fine beast so much exceed that of other animals that I, for one, could never tire of hunting him.

A chapter on pre-war shooting has been included in order that the young sportsman may realize what it was then, and how well that of the present day compares with it, if a man goes the right way to work.

My first introduction to tiger was in 1894. I was then quartered at Secunderabad in the Deccan, which I considered then, and do still consider, to be one of the best sporting stations in India. There was excellent tiger-shooting within reach. Panther abounded ; and many a happy Wednesday and Saturday did I have, riding out

twenty or thirty miles, sitting up in the evening and shooting snipe next day. Polo and racing flourished. There was no pig-sticking, because there was not then, nor apparently ever has been, at Secunderabad any one with sufficient expert knowledge to start a serious campaign against the numerous pig that could undoubtedly be hunted in that country.

My first year, except for trips after odd bear and panther, was taken up in learning my work. But in the following year, B. of the 1st Madras Lancers, H. (R.F.A.), and I got leave for three months.

The Deccan system in those days was for a man to send out, in the early winter, shikaris equipped with his visiting-cards, which had the date on them, to be left with the head men of villages. If the shikari came to a village where there were either no cards, or cards of more than a year old, he left a new card ; and the shooting in the jungles of that village then belonged to his master for the ensuing season.

A shooting area was thus reserved. Of course the villages had to be contiguous or the system would have been impracticable. The direction in which shikaris were sent was settled by arrangement between officers and messes at the Club, and it was the usual etiquette that an officer of a regiment should have the prior claim to a jungle vacated by officers of his regiment. There was no limit to the number of tiger that might be shot.

Of course the considerable disadvantages in a system of this nature are obvious. It has now

been changed for many years past. Only a portion of the country is thrown open annually to shooting, and the rest is strictly preserved. Permission to shoot has to be obtained, and the number of tiger that may be shot is limited.

Generally, in the Gunners we did not do badly. But the halcyon days were gone when our predecessors, the British Cavalry in particular, made bags which make my mouth water to this moment.

There was a considerable bandobast to make; maps had to be obtained, routes and country thought out, shikaris sent on in November with cards and again in February, and all the supplies and transport for a big shoot, miles from any railway, arranged.

In all this lay quite half the pleasure of the shoot, in anticipation.

On our first shoot our arrangements were good enough, but we trusted our shikaris and they let us in badly; one of them turned out to be a drunkard and the other a liar. Consequently we only got one tiger and various panther and bear.

The one tiger came out to me and gave an easy shot. He weighed 480 lbs. and measured 9 feet. That was over the curves. In those days we always measured over the curves, and I have stuck to that system ever since. I know that peg to peg is the universal method now adopted; but as I have never shot any approach to a record, nor have ever sent any measurements for registration, my method affects no one but myself.

Neither our panther nor our bear gave us much excitement. The bear we got climbing among the rocky hills. We ate a joint from one

out of curiosity, but did not like it. I shot two panther, both good males, and one of them was a particularly fine specimen.

I was on the edge of a nullah lined with korindah bushes. The panther passed down the bank below me unseen. A man ran up to me and said the panther had halted in a bush in the nullah a hundred yards further on. I ran there and saw my friend, a dim shape in the bush below me. Full of enthusiasm, I fired my rifle without any aim into the brown of him. The bullet went in at his ear. "That was a good shot of yours," said H., "but I don't think you are wise to fire at so small a mark as the head."

"Ah, well, the head shot is so deadly."

"H'm," said H.

Towards the end of our shoot, we had a tiger kill in a valley in which were a pool of water and many low bushes, but no trees. We had settled to draw lots on each tiger kill. I won and accordingly sat up. I recall this with regret. There is no selfishness to equal the thoughtless selfishness of youth. Poor H. sat up over the pool, in case the tiger should go there. I sat in a bush on the ground and could see H. round the corner, some way off.

Before it was dusk I saw a panther come and sit like a dog behind H., who, in his turn, was industriously watching the water.

The tiger came after dark on to the kill, which was close to my front. I hit him, and he made a great noise rolling and roaring until the low sides of the valley rang with the echoes; then he went off. We took the blood-tracks, next

morning, to a small isolated clump of rocks where we lost them. We hunted among the rocks; but not, as I now think, nearly thoroughly enough, for I believe a crawling search would have found him dead.

Next year I went after bison. The following one, F. and B. and I, all gunners, had a fine shoot, getting 18 tiger (including 5 cubs unavoidably shot), 6 panther, and 1 bear. F. was a first-class organizer, shikari, and linguist.

We had the best lot of shikaris I have ever seen—six of them, under a head man, Fareed Khan. The latter's was the directing spirit. He was a well-educated man with bad nerves, and he never went into a beat. We wondered how he kept his prestige. The six men under him were hard-bitten sons of Ishmael, good keen men, fit to run a beat or to go on detached work. We had our November and February reconnaissances. The latter gave us detailed information of the whereabouts of tiger, and to it much of our success was due. "Time spent in reconnaissance is seldom wasted," says the soldier's bible.

The quality of the beating and of the shikar work was shown by the fact that only one tiger was lost out of a beat, and that we had few difficult shots. This last is one of the sure signs of good beating. Galloping animals mean bad work.

Of course with so many shikaris the handling of machâns, stops, and line was made easy. The principle of putting out stops was that followed by the good men I had with me in 1921. The shikaris started the stops from the centre gun

and spread out like a fan as quickly as possible to the ends of the line of beaters. Two men at least are wanted for this. If there is only one man he must do one flank first and then the other ; this means delay, and the tiger may hear the noise and get away through the open flank. Stops should always start from the centre. I have lost more than one tiger through breaking this rule.

If the cover into which the tiger will take his kill is known for certain, machâns may well be put up before the kill. In any case, if there is time before there is a kill, guns and shikaris should reconnoitre probable lines of guns and stops as well as the country into which the tiger would go if wounded. This is a considerable help in following up.

It is hardly necessary to emphasize the importance of silence in placing guns and stops.

A good but elaborate system of preparation of ground, of stops, and of beating by watch and with certain manœuvres, has been described by a recent writer. Friends of mine have worked on his system and found it excellent. To my mind it is too elaborate. Shikaris and beaters who can work by time in varying formations require to be highly trained ; and I do not think that, moving camp frequently and working on a large scale, it is practicable to prepare the beats in the way of cutting paths, to any large extent.

We should have increased our bag, but had to stop in one camp for ten days doing nothing while I was recovering from a panther mauling. I took a long shot at a big panther in a beat. He fell but got up, and I missed with my left, and we

followed up into thick grass and bushes. We had just decided to put in buffaloes first, and I was disentangling my hat from a bough when we were charged from a few paces ; I fired one barrel from the hip and missed. The others had no chance of firing. The panther took my left shoulder in his mouth and with his hind claws he held my thighs. One hand was damaged. The charge knocked me over and we had a scrimmage on the ground. I tried to kick him, and never thought of my hunting knife : my rifle had fallen wide. The others rushed in and the panther dropped me and bolted, fired at by them and I think missed, as he went. I hope he lived.

The shoulder wounds were fairly deep and did not do well at first. Our syringe was broken but F. made one out of a peacock's quill, and with the aid of this, strong carbolic acid, and running cold water, I was able to shoot in a fortnight. The railway was, luckily, too far off.

Few of our tiger gave us any trouble. We followed up three or four times. I used an 8-bore Paradox for this work. We never found our first tiger ; there was no blood, and I doubt if he was hit. This was as well, for on opening the breech of the Paradox I found I had never loaded. I did not tell my companions although their fire should have been sufficient without mine. Three reliable guns ought not to have any trouble following up, whereas a single gun may be temporarily put out of action through no fault of his own.

We had three tiger in one beat. F. killed the two males, and I knocked the tigress over, giving

her a severe wound high up in the shoulder, which destroyed some of the vertebræ and left a hole as big as a man's fist. We tracked that beast all that day and found we were wrong; we tracked her on the following day, found she was moving on; and tracked her on the third day into an awkward ravine, out of which she luckily went of her own accord. B. then killed her, trotting, with a beautiful long shot.

This was my tigress theoretically, because I had fired first and we had never given her up. B. refused to take her; she was certainly his in reality. The original wound, though severe, was not a mortal one.

The only fair rule is that the tiger shall belong to whosoever inflicts the first injury that would kill. Even this rule does not do away with the luck of the draw for place. In this shoot and in the one before I had considerably more than my share of shooting simply through this luck. The only way to obviate this would be to draw for the trophies, a proceeding unsatisfactory to every one.

The tiger defeated us altogether, for he went straight for the beaters at once; and we would not risk a repetition of this. He was a hot-tempered beast whom we called "Shaitan," and had killed a bear some feet up a tree one day. He was shot next year after nearly pulling one of the 4th Hussars out of a tree. It was apparently a habit of his.

After one beat a big python was reported in a rocky pool. We found him there, 18 feet long, more python than pool. B. was a very powerful

man and an amateur blacksmith. He insisted on seizing this creature to capture it alive. The python drew up a loop of itself, like a caterpillar, and straightened out, sending B. flying; so we then shot it.

I have written enough about this shoot. Afterwards, for many years I spent all the hot weathers pig-sticking. I had some fine short tiger shoots in the Terai with Sir John Hewett, and went after various odd tiger and panther, sometimes with nothing to record and sometimes with incidents mentioned elsewhere. For several years in the rains I went after bison, as also recorded in another chapter.

In 1912 N. and I did a pleasant two months' shoot. We had choice of two places, one near to civilization and one far off. We chose the former, but we were wrong. If you want good sport go far afield. The further you go the better, generally, will be your sport.

We got three tiger and a lot of bear. N.'s tigress fell to a long trotting shot. She was a vicious animal, who had killed one of our beaters through no fault of his.

I was nearly driven crazy one day, when sitting up, by the cicadas, who with their buzzing gave me the worst headache I have ever had in my life.

The bear were great fun, and N. one day had to flee for his life with three of them howling in hot pursuit.

I was wandering among the rocks one evening, and climbed up a gully into a cave, which was empty but had every sign of recent bear. So

next day at noon I stalked up to the top of the gully, and, looking over, saw a fat old lady sleeping placidly. I shot her and two more full-sized bear which rushed out.

We had a beat one day, and they came out in coveys, of which we took due toll.

Another day we had some fun retrieving one from a cave. They are delightful creatures, bears, and one never takes them very seriously, though my friend B. was once terribly mauled about the face by one.

CHAPTER III

VARIOUS EPISODES IN THE DOON AND TERAI JUNGLES

“Midst music of the pine trees
And the jungle’s deep refrain,
The twin great rivers rise and flow
Towards the sunlit plain.”

I WAS lucky enough to enjoy Sir John Hewett’s great hospitality during part of three of the big annual shoots that he held in these jungles.

These were some of the best days that I have ever spent. The good sport, the experience of beating with a long line of elephants through these great forests and open grass “sôts” with the Himalayas for their background, the fine camps, and the happy party, are recollections that will not fade. These shoots were probably some of the last that will ever be held on the grand scale reminiscent of the great Nawabs of old. And if, as an unimportant private individual, I may hazard an opinion, I would say that they helped enormously to keep up the prestige of the Government with the People, who are denied the privilege enjoyed by their political and lawyer brethren of listening to wisdom in council.

As I hope that Sir John will one day be per-

suaded to write an account of these shoots, I refrain from describing them.

I got panther there, but never shot a tiger. Many of the latter were bagged while I was out, and I had at least three good chances, but I missed every time. I never could shoot from a howdah. I was firing with a .400 that had never been fitted to me, and I think I always fired too high. One tiger especially made me very sad. I was ahead with two other guns as stops, and the line beat up to us through high grass. A fine tiger came out to the gun on my right and was missed. He crossed my front at easy range and I missed with both barrels. He then turned back, went for the line, sprang at Sir John's elephant, and was dropped dead by him as he sprang. A beautiful shot, but it did not console me for my rotten shooting.

Once we had a curious proof of the erratic course a high velocity bullet may take. We had beaten for a tiger and failed to get him. I was mounted that year on a stone-blind elephant, and I never rode a safer or a stauncher animal. Sir John did not care for people sitting up; but as he wanted me to get a tiger, he detailed me to do so for this one. I got into the machân at about 3 P.M. It was rather of the crow's-nest type, in the lower branches of a big tree, and was undoubtedly insufficiently screened at the sides. At 4 P.M. the tiger came down the hillside opposite, making the country ring with his yawning roars. He did not take a straight course to the kill, but slewed off about eighty yards to my left. When he reached the foot of the hill he halted in the open

and stood left broadside on, head turned towards and staring at me. I turned to stone. We stayed like this for what seemed a long time : I knew he suspected me and feared he would go. I carefully lifted my rifle up, aimed at his shoulder and fired. The tiger spoke to the shot and galloped off.

I was using a double-barrelled .400 H.V. rifle. Shikaris on an elephant came up, and we tracked till dusk and again next morning, finding plenty of blood but no tiger. I felt a fool that evening at having to tell Sir John that I had made such a mess of an easy shot. To cheer me up, he said, "Oh, we shall come across him again." I replied that I feared there was no chance, and laid 30 to 1 against it. This bet Sir John took.

Two days later A. of the 9th Hodson's Horse shot this very tiger, a handsome male with the two days' wound on him. No other tiger had been wounded or lost, so there was no doubt as to this animal's identity.

We traced the course of my bullet ; it was marked throughout by clotted blood. This and the entrance and exit holes showed clearly that the tiger must have seen the movement of the rifle and swung round on his haunches as I fired. His near forearm, then, instead of being vertical was horizontal and pointing at me. The bullet struck the centre of the forearm, went through it, ran up the inside of the arm until it met the chest, ran round the chest between the ribs and the skin and went out at the off shoulder, inflicting in all its course only a slight flesh wound. The wound

admitted of no other explanation. With a low velocity rifle this could never have happened ; and I was tempted for a time to revert to the old .577 and black powder.

The bagging of this tiger was a great relief to me, and it was with real pleasure I paid the thirty rupees of my bet.

At different times I had two delightful shoots with my old friend C. : one in our borderland and one in Nepal. Actual sport was on the whole indifferent as the weather and local conditions were unfavourable on both occasions.

In the Nepal shoot I was again put to sit up for a tiger after a beat. A pair of tiger had killed and dragged the tie-up. While we lunched before beating, the pair came back and lunched also. But we did not get them in the beat, so I was told by my host to sit up. The kill had been dragged to the top of a little rise in bamboo grass and bush jungle. There were no trees, and we fixed up a sort of scaffolding machân with two or three upright bamboos ten feet high, safe enough but too sketchy and cramped for an all-night sit, so an elephant was to come for me at 10 P.M.

The beats had been late in the afternoon and I only got posted shortly before dusk. Soon I heard the heavy breathing of an animal climbing the hill. This was the male tiger. He puffed up the rise like an old gentleman short of breath, and sat for half an hour in a thick patch on my right where I could hear his every breath. He then crossed my front and sat in another thick patch about twenty yards away to the left front. There was a full moon. The tiger had not as

yet shown himself. From the patch where he was now halted a little game-track a couple of feet wide with high grass on each side of it ran down to the kill. The heavy breathing continued for nearly half an hour; then it ceased and a silent form crept down the track, seeming to fill it.

On reaching the kill, the tiger, who had throughout evidently been suspicious of the machân, stood with his forefeet on the kill at a distance of some six yards from me with his beautiful solemn head staring up in the full moonlight, and his chest showing up very white.

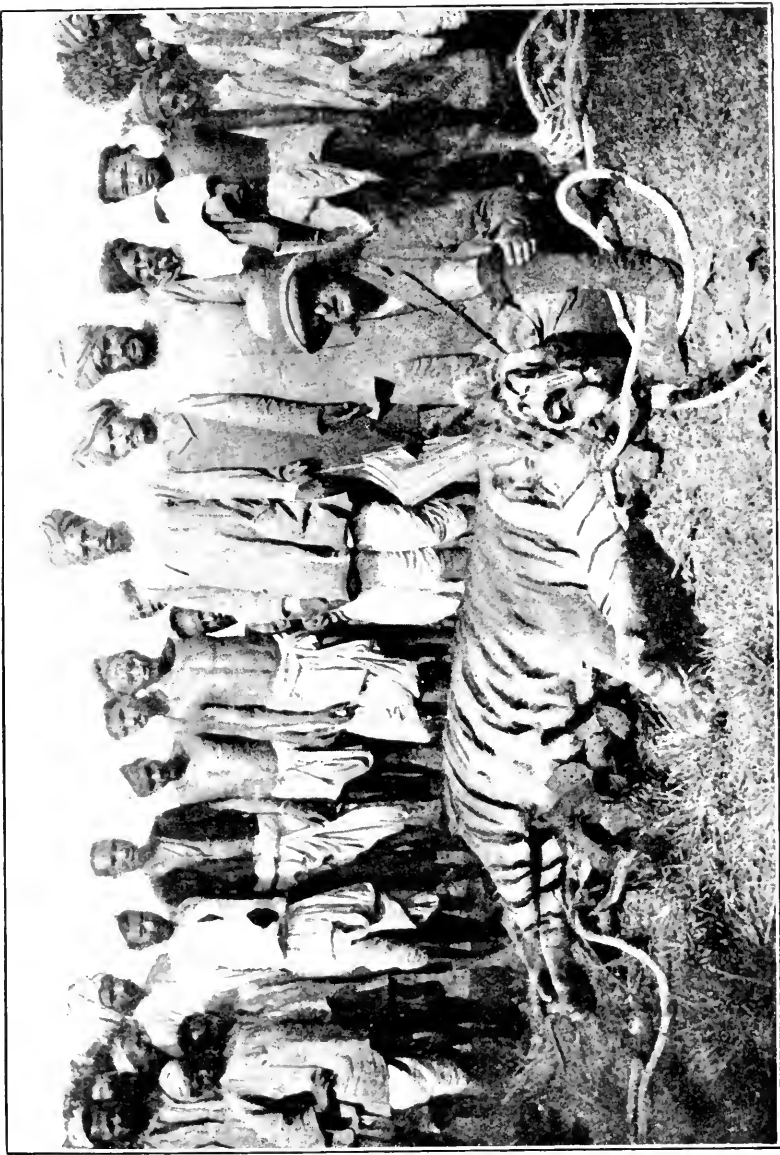
After a long look he was satisfied and turned to eat; and I shot him through the back with the .470. He gave no sound but galloped off.

I went home on the elephant. It was useless to look in the moonlight. My wife and I retrieved him early the following morning lying dead fifty yards away. He was a particularly fine big specimen of a northern cold weather tiger with a throat ruff like that of a maned lion.

I have never sat so still for so long before, and I could never have done so cross-legged. C. had insisted on my taking a basket stool, which made all the difference.

The certainty that this animal was close and meant to come on to his kill, and the finale in the bright moonlight made this an evening to be remembered.

The details of the attack of this tiger when he killed were clearly shown in the firm sand of the nullah. The first strolling pug-marks, the halt and pause when he saw the buffalo, the long steps



"HE WAS A FINE SPECIMEN OF A NORTHERN COLD WEATHER TIGER."

first and the short ones later with outstretched claws of the actual attack, were all visible.

After killing he must have carried the kill on his shoulder, without a trace of it on the ground, up a steep bank twenty feet high which involved a distinct scramble for a man.

I also did a couple of trips alone on the borders of the Terai, combining pig-sticking with shooting on off days. I got no tiger on these trips, though in one place at least I had only myself to blame.

My horses wanted a rest, so I took a week off and went further than usual. There were several fresh tracks about, but I got no kill at the beginning. I was then fool enough to fire at jungle fowl, only a couple of shots. But all fresh tiger tracks then ceased.

I am convinced one ought never to fire gun or rifle within three miles of tiger cover. Some say it does not matter: I entirely disagree with them, and my belief is confirmed by losing tiger from shooting game on other occasions.

I have mentioned just now doing nothing at the beginning, and my experience is that as a rule on arrival at a place it takes four or five days before all the kills are properly placed, the local inhabitants trust one, and news begins to come in—unless, and that is a big word, one has had a really good outlying shikari on in advance.

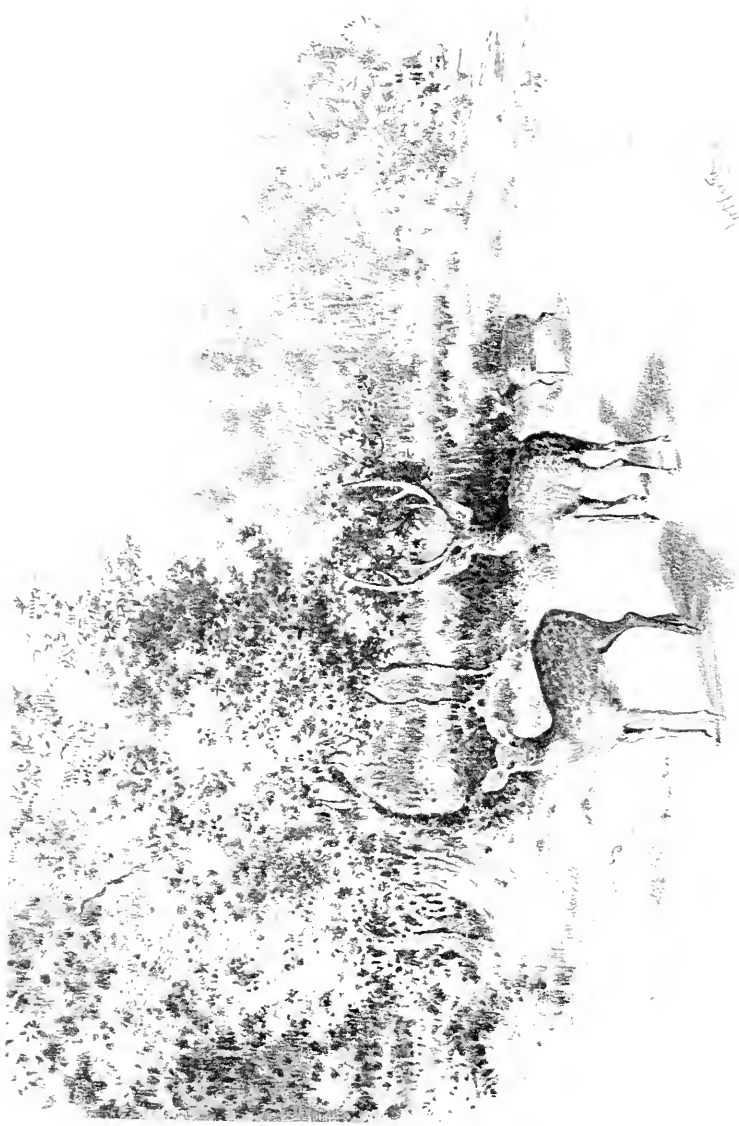
On this trip when I lost tiger I shot a good panther who had killed two of my tie-ups and had never returned. We dug a hole in the river-bank and I sat up over a live goat. Falling asleep, I was awakened by the thud of the kill. I ought to have shot the panther dead, for I was firing

with the 8-bore at close range in good moonlight over white sand. However, we put in buffaloes next day and retrieved him dead. Old Kurera had to climb hurriedly up a tree to get out of the way of our stampeding charging buffaloes.

In 1920, while waiting to join C. on his Nepal shoot, my wife and I were given permission, through C.'s kindly offices, to shoot the private preserves of the Maharajah of Kapurthala. These preserves made a little paradise full of chital, nilghai, and pig, with a few panther. There were no tiger in it. We were sorry to leave this charming and hospitable spot, where there was a delightful bungalow, comfortably furnished, with a large compound full of trees in which lived innumerable monkeys; and we amused ourselves often in the evenings watching simian family life.

There were numbers of butterflies which with their variety and brilliant colouring tempted us both, my wife especially, to catch them.

Our amusements were varied, as besides the shooting, we motored sometimes in a car which had been put at our disposal; and our two elephants were an endless source of joy as we watched their toilets and laughed over their idiosyncrasies. They took us many a mile up the river, which abounded with mugger, and my wife was never tired of stalking these with a kodak and watching me shoot them. I remember one which slipped into the water after I had shot it dead, as I thought, and it was afterwards picked up and dragged many miles back to camp. When it was cut open it proved to have at least thirty



CHITAL.

eggs inside it, all undamaged, and they filled a large basket.

I feared at first we should get little sport, as the local men did not help much, but one day a gentleman from a neighbouring district (whom we afterwards named "Jones" as we could not pronounce his name) presented himself and promised to show us everything. I gave him a trial, and he certainly knew the ways of game, and got me all the chances I could wish.

He was naturally not very popular with the local shikaris whom he had displaced. He amused us with his overbearing patronage of manner, and his costume of khaki coat, jodhpur trousers made of grey serge, black "pill-box" forage cap, and a pair of patent leather dancing pumps, in which he walked all day.

I shot three chital over 35 inches and then held my hand.

Of panther I shot one, and let another walk under my tree before I was ready, and I never saw him again, though he worked up close in the dusk, for I saw the bushes shaking.

A nice panther killed a goat one day and hid it twelve feet up in the branches of a tree. I took post in another tree and deservedly saw nothing, while the panther doubtless watched from below and laughed. The kill being high up, it was certain that the panther's eyes would be looking upwards, and my machân should therefore have been on the ground in a bush or, better, in a hole.

CHAPTER IV

A CENTRAL PROVINCE SHOOT IN 1921

“Agar Firdos beh rue zameenast”—
(‘If there is a Paradise on earth’—)

IN the winter of 1920 my wife and I had a successful motor tour of 3500 miles, driving ourselves from Kashmir up to the Afghan Frontier and thence through Northern and Central India, without a chauffeur and with no involuntary stops except two punctures and one tyre burst.

We finished our trip in February 1921 with twenty-five miles of unmetalled, and in parts rocky, road to our block in the Central Provinces.

We were at some height. Our surroundings and the climate were delightful. There was a sting in the air at night. The season was an early one, and throughout the first stages of our road the mango blossom was beginning to show in strength; while in the jungle everywhere were the signs of the dâk:—

“Of flowers that with one scarlet gleam
Cover a hundred leagues and seem
To set the hills on fire.”

And already there was a whiff of the glorious never-to-be-forgotten, dry, burnt smell of a Central Province hot weather jungle.



IN KASHMIR WITH THE WOLSELEY CAR, 1920-21.

We lived in a forest bungalow and at first had poor sport, for the tiger had already left the hills and gone into the valleys below, of which only one at first belonged to us.

I wanted to feed the villagers and did some amazingly bad shooting at nilghai, which abounded there. After wounding one, I feared my little rifle was too light, so after that I fired at them no more.

One evening our small dog was chased by two wolves right up to our feet as we were out for an evening stroll. I could have shot them easily, but for once had no rifle with me. The wolves were certainly not stretching themselves and the dog was not alarmed. It was a friendly affair, and the second instance of such that I have seen between dogs and wolves.

The spear grass was high and troublesome. Luckily khaki is almost proof against this grass. Gaiters are a necessity but bare legs are better.

I was unable to do much for a week owing to a bad foot. My bath was outside the bungalow in a tent, and stepping to it one evening I felt something curl on my leg and bite my big toe. The creature dropped off: I ran to the light and found two close punctured holes with a spot of blood on each.

Within a minute of being bitten I tied a ligature and cut deep into and round the toe with a razor, and my wife and I rubbed in permanganate at once. She gave me hot milk and put me to bed. I had a big yawning attack and a feeling of contraction in the throat as if some one were

gripping it. This passed off later, and I was fit enough next day except for a lame foot.

As in nearly all cases of snake bite, the experience was an unsatisfactory one, as we never found the snake, nor could we tell whether he was fresh or had recently used his fangs. The symptoms seemed to indicate a snake of the Russel's viper type.

I missed a panther, while sitting up, with a patent bullet from an old shot-gun, which I am certain I should not have done with a rifle.

The first trophy of the trip was a tigress, which stalked down to her kill at 4.30 P.M. I was in a high tree and the kill lay on one of the open plateaux that I love, sloping down from the tigress's cover. She was in view from me for a hundred yards, and it was interesting to see her stalk up on the "bound" system from bush to bush with a pause at each.

After that we moved to a lowland valley, but before doing so we beat for a tigress which was lying up in a nice overhanging wood on the side of a river. The beat was an easy one, but the local shikari insisted that the tigress would break out to the flank up a little nullah that ran up from the river through the wood, and he posted us accordingly. Unfortunately the tigress, roaring savagely after much beating, took a new line to the end of the cover, up steep cliffs, and away along the river. This was the more natural line of retreat and we ought to have been there, but I had trusted to the local knowledge instead of going myself all over the ground as soon as we began tying up.

Although no longer in our block, we were allowed to continue tying up for this animal. When we had been in our new quarters a few days news reached us at midday that there had been a kill there as well as one, of which we already knew, only a mile from home.

We decided that I should beat for the former and then join my wife and sit up for the latter.

A six mile jog-trot march brought me to our old beat by 2.30 P.M. Beaters were to have been ready on a kill occurring. Unluckily the men were late and the beat did not start until 3.40 P.M. This time I was in a good tree on the cliff at the end of the beat. We put stopping cloth and stops in our old nullah.

After some time the noise of the beaters died out and I could see men running across the stream. My tree commanded a beautiful panoramic view of the blue rocky stream and endless ridge and dale of thick tree-tops.

Presently a little Korku ran to me saying the tigress was visible in a patch of cover in the beat, and refused to move. I got down, made a *détour* and ran with the little man to where the beaters were up trees. We reached a tree with half-a-dozen men, all pointing, festooned on it. The Korku shinned up and I followed, only in time to hear groans of "Ah, she's gone." I jumped down and flew back round to the cliff, telling the Korku to get hold of the shikari and have the beat restarted.

After a long time this was done, but the line was bad and the yelling only half-hearted. However, I sat still as a mouse. It was the only thing

to do. After a long time I heard a rustle, and then to my delight the tigress stealthily climbed up the cliff, and I dropped her dead at my tree. This was a truculent animal, and I was glad to have had no accidents to the men.

As it was now nearly 4.45 P.M., I handed over money for the beaters, contrary to rule, and started "all out" for the home tiger. But my original guides being tired, I was given two outside men, who lost their way. We got entangled in deep ravines and only reached home tired and hungry at 9 P.M., having covered a good many miles.

My wife had gone alone to sit up, and knowing she had no rifle I hurried after her, taking a man with a lantern. I soon knew there was no chance, for the tiger was grumbling as we got to the machân. My wife had had the light on him, and she saw him, which was the only consolation. He would have been an easy shot, and was evidently a fine animal. It was the stupidity of the guides that lost him. A hyæna came often, but I slept mostly, cold and weary. However, I was pleased at having helped to beat the tigress up to my own machân, and at having then shot her.

The little Korku got a good reward.

From now onwards I continued my shoot alone, my wife having left for England. After seeing her off from Bombay I rejoined my camp, which had moved a few miles to the side of a river. Behind the camp lay open fields with sunken lanes bounded by hedges and real gates. Blackbuck grazed all day, pig and deer held

carnival there by night. In the surrounding jungles were good chital and sambhur.

In front of the camp was the village ; beyond it the river, drying up fast into a succession of rock-bound pools, ran through cliffs and past shelving banks covered with sombre teak forest. The mango and the dâk were in full flower, while here and there towering high were the graceful semal trees giving their splash of colour ; “ the Ceiba’s crimson pomp.”

This was the most sporting place in which I have ever been ; to my lasting sorrow I only had ten days of it.

Tiger were numerous ; we got kills at once. I sat up and lost two. In one case my machân was too close to the cover, and in the other a party of fishermen proceeded to fish all night close to the kill.

After this we had one of my favourite kills on sloping ground ; and Govind, one of the last month’s Korku allies, posted me well in a beautifully made machân in a high tree. A sloping plateau is good because the tiger looks down, thinks he can see everywhere, and that all is clear.

The jungles round the camp were too extensive to permit of beating.

Early in the afternoon a little red fox trotted past within twenty yards, brush erect and never a glance at the kill ; virtue personified, “ oh, thief of all the world.” Shortly before dark back came the little fox, a sneaking criminal now, and proceeded to eat. But it was an uneasy meal, with conscience-stricken rushes to help digestion, and in the last light of dusk he gave tongue

sharply several times and fled. A minute later a tigress walked quietly from behind the tree and I killed her.

At midnight a tiger came under my tree, but thinking he was a sambhur I took no steps to be quiet and discovered my mistake too late.

Three days later there was a kill by a big tiger, probably my midnight friend, some two miles from where I had shot the tigress.

I sat on the edge of the river looking up a succession of beautiful blue rock-bound pools. On my bank the heavy jungle skirted the river for miles; on the other bank was a patch of jungle adjoining the river, thick opposite me but running to a point half a mile up. The track to my machân passed through this patch and across the river. The kill was where a dry nullah ran down from the low hills on my left into the river.

The jungles were beautiful; the foliage was generally golden brown interspersed with patches of green and red. I sat in one of four trees of the "flame of the forest," a flaming mass of brightest crimson, so bright that my eyes ached with the sight until the sun sank.

I was some sixty yards from the kill; the powerful electric light was fitted and all was well, though I viewed with mistrust a leafy bush close to the kill, which I dared not touch, and into which I feared the tiger might drag it.

There was no moon. At 8 P.M. I heard my friend the little red fox giving tongue sharp and loud half a mile away.

"It's the tiger, I tell you it's the tiger," he shrilled.

"All right, little friend, then I'll expect him at 8.15."

At 8.22 came the quiet gurgling sigh of a tiger wanting his food. This was repeated at 8.30, and at 8.50 came the noise of rending of flesh and cracking of bones. Surely no bite to fisherman was half so sweet as this.

I let the tiger eat for five minutes and then turned on the light. There was not a sign of kill or tiger. I switched the light everywhere and suddenly got a momentary full-length view of the tiger for a second when he moved into the bushes.

Again he stepped out and I could see his neck and off shoulder. I fired. The tiger spoke to the shot and dashed off to the opposite bank. Then I heard no more.

At 4 A.M. I heard a tiger singing his grand "Aa-oonh, aa-oonh!" This call has a solemn vibrating note as if sounded from the depth of some great organ pipe. When the call came opposite me there were two savage roars "Agh-agh," and the calling animal wandered disconsolately off.

"This must be the tigress visiting her stricken mate." She came back calling at 5 A.M. Again she met the same savage roars, after which she passed up the river, returned on my bank and took post on the high ground above me, and remained calling pathetically until 7.30 A.M.

At 6 A.M. I stood up and was met by similar roars.

I was anxious about my men, who were due at dawn by the path where the tiger lay. I succeeded

in turning them. Old Govind the Korku came along, beaming with smiles but shivering with cold. He strolled up the river-bed with his hands under his blanket as if he were in his own little hamlet.

"Look here, Govind," I said, "you must be more careful. The tiger is badly wounded and has just been roaring from those bushes."

"What is a tiger, Sahib? Death is a little thing, every man has his fate."

We tracked the blood, but the tiger had moved on.

The patch grew dense with bamboo and long grass, so we went back to camp to collect buffaloes and eat some food.

We went out again as soon as possible with the buffaloes and drove them through the cover up to its point. There was no result.

"Govind, we must go back to the blood tracks. We've gone wrong."

He and I walked back outside the cover, leaving the buffaloes to be collected. The ground we went over was open, dry plain with yellow grass an inch long; it was treeless except for an occasional sapling.

I was in front, Govind sixty yards behind me. I happened to turn and saw him halt, turn half left about, and walk with his right arm slightly out sideways, palm horizontal with the ground. Three curious puzzled steps, and out went the arm further. Another little advance, and still further out went the accusing arm. I was rapidly moving on Govind. Out went his arm pointing straight, and I knew it was the tiger. I ran to



"GORIND WAS GIVING WAY TO NO FATALISTIC VIEWS."

him, and as I did so he turned and ran hard to me. I heard three coughing grunts, and there was the tiger in full charge after Govind and some fifty yards behind him.

The tiger seemed to gallop very fast with a marked bounding action. This was probably due to his broken shoulder. He pecked once, and snarled. He had his tail erect, his mouth was wide open. There was literally not a blade of grass to hide his full beauty in this fine charge. Govind, all out and giving way to no fatalistic views, passed close to me on my right. The tiger was then twenty yards from him.

The .470 caught the tiger in the centre of his chest where the neck joins it. The bullet raked the length of his body. He fell in a crumpled heap, but got up at once. I put the left bullet through both shoulder-blades. The tiger still tried with claw and mouth to reach me. I reloaded and fired into his chest. A shudder passed over him, and this splendid fighting savage died without a groan.

He was a heavy male, 9' 5½". It took eight men to lift him. He fell seventeen paces from me, having charged for eighty-two paces. He must have slunk out of the cover on hearing the buffaloes and squatted under a couple of tiny saplings in full view. Govind could not believe his eyes at first and would not signal. I think the tiger was going a good pace, partly from the way he overhauled Govind, who, however, is not a ten-seconds man, and partly from the tracks. To every third footmark of the running man came a pad-mark with claws deep cut.

Govind came up and we shook each other's hands. "A man's fate is written," said he.

A little crowd soon collected, and within a short time every one of these men claimed to have been in the fight.

"All these fine fellows seem to have been there, Govind; where were you and I?"

"Sahib, we were at H.," said the old man. (H. is the railway station twenty-two miles away.)

After this there were a couple of blank days, and I amused myself sitting up for a panther which never came. On the second evening I fell asleep with the little rifle in my lap, and was awakened by feeling it slip, and hearing the cartridges go off as it struck the ground below. There are drawbacks to sitting with the safety catch in the firing position. Both barrels went off, the stock was broken at the pistol hand, and an inch was blown off the muzzle of one barrel. The rifle had luckily landed muzzle down: the other way up might have been awkward. This was the little .318 by Westley Richards, and I was sorely grieved. However, Chand, the brilliant Meerut gunsmith, made me a stock as good as the old one and trimmed and joined the barrels temporarily. I shot a panther with it soon afterwards. Since then it has been overhauled by its makers, the inch has been cut off the other barrel, and it is now making very accurate shooting—that is, when I allow it to do so.

There was then a tiger kill some miles down the river. I had an outlying shikari there and he made the machân. I could not see to it

myself for I had to go into H. to motor out a non-shooting guest who came to stop with me.

When I got to the machân it was dusk. It was badly made and badly tied to a thin tree on the top of a bank, above a nullah with a drop of ten feet. The machân must have been some twenty feet up in the tree itself, for there were three men, one above the other, passing up the kit.

No sooner had the men gone than down came the vultures in clouds. There would shortly be no kill left. I threw everything I had at the birds and then started to get down to put up some form of stick scarecrow.

I had one hand on a branch and one foot on another, when both broke, and I found myself thirty feet down in the nullah. I was knocked out and unable to move, but not unconscious. After a little I got up and found my left arm broken. I felt rather groggy and stupid. Having taken my boots off for quietness, they, with my rifle and all the kit, were in the machân.

It was now dark, but the evening light was still in the west. I was in a bit of jungle I had not seen before, thickly wooded, with winding nullahs and intervening higher ground, skirting the main river, which lay about a mile to the west.

If I could gain the main river I knew that I could get home. I tried following the nullah, but it wound so much and the going was so heavy that I took a line across country, over nullahs and up and down hills, steering for the fading light. There was no path. I had to hold up my left arm with my right, and could not stoop to pick out thorns from my feet; but these were not bad.

After what seemed a long time I struck the river. I do not know how long I had been ; my watch had stopped in the fall. Then I got to a village I knew, and so, some two hours later, at about 11.30 P.M., to camp. The villagers were good people and gave me very sweet milk to drink. They tried to put me in a cart, but this was too uncomfortable and I walked all the way.

My guest did first-class work in getting an American medical missionary out to me from H. early next morning, and he set my arm, which had one big and two small breaks. I cannot thank these two friends enough.

I was carried seven hours during the day into the rail, and twenty-four hours later was met by W., and taken to the good Meerut Military Hospital at midnight, where they gave me morphia ; and I was glad.

The bones had been well set, but the elbow was also dislocated, and it took some while to detect this and put it right, as the inflammation had to go down.

The arm was broken on the 3rd of March. It was finally reset and put in plaster on the 12th of March. On the 21st I was riding an elephant throughout the Kadir Cup Meeting ; and on the 10th of April, using a heavy rifle, I shot a tiger : a good tribute to the skill of Colonel Watts, Captain Martin, and the nursing sisters. I owe them my deep gratitude for all their care.

I was very sorry to leave this shoot, where but for my spill I believe I should have shot three or four more tiger.

W. and I shot these jungles again in October 1922.

I had two theories : (*a*) (not original) that the tiger having been free from worry throughout the rainy months would come out unsuspiciously on to their kills ; (*b*) that the grass being thick, the tiger would use the paths more than ever, and it was there that they would be found, instead of by the rivers as in the hot weather.

Theory *a* was totally wrong. Theory *b* was borne out in part.

But I forgot the autumn running. These brutes were all in love, and they would caterwaul to each other all night, while the last things they thought of were killing and food. They did kill twelve of our tie-ups, but on the railway refreshment-room plan—a hasty snack and a drink of blood and then return no more. I have seen nothing like it. We shot two tigers, and, as may be imagined, they were stout old gentlemen too sensible even in the love season to forego their dinner and a glass of port.

We were not making machâns beforehand on account of the numerous tie-ups. This was a bad mistake and probably lost us some tiger.

On these shoots, as well as on many others, I look back with gratitude to the camaraderie and help I always met with from my friends of all ranks of the Imperial Forest Service.

CHAPTER V

A SHOOT IN AN INDIAN STATE IN 1921

“ In regions where the burnished sun has sway.”

FOR the last fourteen years I had wanted to shoot in this State, but, apart from the necessary permission, the difficulties of transport and the inaccessibility of the country were considerable. However, in 1921 I obtained leave, and I would thank the Maharajah and his state officials for their courteous help.

The country was one that was seldom shot. My ground was of unlimited extent, and began five marches from the nearest railway. It consisted of rocky hills and some open plains interspersed with big sâl and light tree jungles through which ran two main rivers, reduced at this season to a trickle of water in sandy beds. The plains had been cultivated, but owing to years of drought and the great heat then prevailing, they were at this time very desolate in appearance.

In spite of the efforts made by the State, the scanty population had to sustain life largely on the mohwa fruit. Famine conditions were not actually present, but the fine-drawn bodies and the prevalence of non-healing sores showed how

small was the margin of strength among the people.

Like any one else in similar circumstances, I naturally did all I could to relieve distress. But the cartage by camel of rations on any scale except for my own people was impossible. We took a few of the worst cases with us, fed them, treated their sores, and sent them back. Here, however, we were handicapped by the unwillingness of the people to leave their homes. Even a trip of ten or twenty miles to the nearest dispensary was considered a tremendous undertaking.

On one or two occasions the offer was made that the patient should be sent in free to the nearest British Civil Hospital and there maintained until cured. In no case was this accepted. One man had had a useless arm for years. It was broken, and could be bent at right angles, between the shoulder and the elbow. This man was told that some months under a skilled surgeon would probably give him a sound arm : it should cost him nothing. The man refused.

Similar offers made to a woman with three children (obviously dying from lack of nourishment) to have one child educated and brought up for a few years in a mission school, were not only refused with tears, but brought a charge of suggested kidnapping and slavery.

With all this conservatism the people were delightful to meet, civil and willing. They knew nothing of the world. They turned out to beat armed with spears, bows and arrows ; and these weapons were also carried by the postmen on

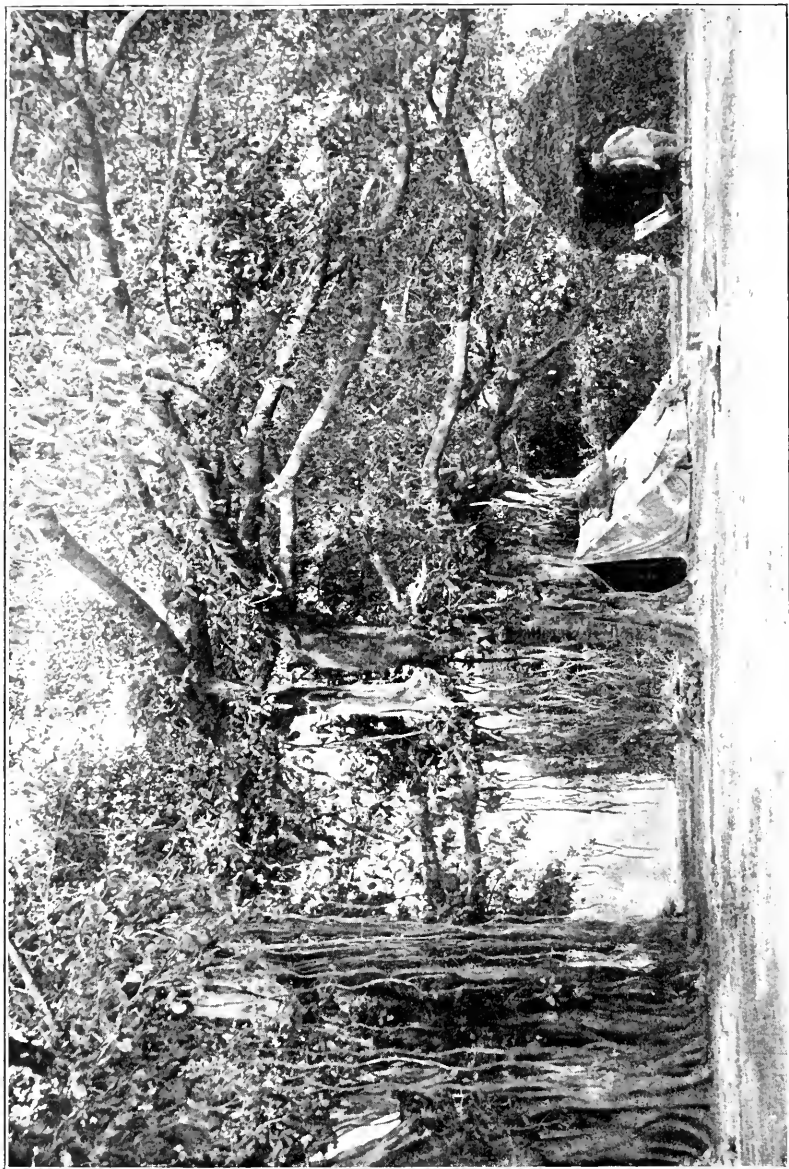
their rounds. Yet it was pathetic that, for all this naïve simplicity, the name of Gandhi was abroad in the land. It was pathetic, for few of them knew who Gandhi was or what he stood for. While I was there they said the edict had gone forth that there should be no more wine and no more fowls. I reasoned with them. Wine was their affair, eggs were mine; and with outstretched cash I persuaded them that a present Sahib was worth many absent Gandhis.

There were no metalled roads—the cost of their construction and maintenance in those wild parts would have been prohibitive—but there were good tracks. Transport was all by camel, donkey, or buffalo. Carts were unknown.

My transport consisted of seven baggage camels, good honest beasts that one could pat even when they were being loaded, and a marked contrast to the gurgling atrocities met with on the roads of Upper India.

The heat was as severe as I have ever known it. During the hot hours of the day, on going out of the shade and meeting the hot blast it was as though one leant against a wall of heat. However, to many besides myself, I think, the heat and the hot weather camps are incomparably more pleasant than the cold. Sport is better in the heat. There are then the joys of the smell of the dried-up jungles, the whiff of the hot wind with its little eddies of dry leaves, the coolness of the streams, and the shade of great trees. Those who only camp in cool weather do not know what a tree can be.

I felt the heat less this year, although we had



“THERE WERE MANY REALLY FINE BANYANS.”

only single-fly 80 lb. tents, because I always insisted on camping under really big shady banyan trees, even though these might involve our being six or seven miles away from the ground we were working. I noticed the difference in my servants. Under the big trees they were well. In one camp we had to occupy wattle and thatch huts without tree shade ; neither of my servants was well, and one of them had considerable headache and bleeding at the nose. A single really big tree gets more wind than a grove of trees, and is much cooler.

My tent was always so pitched that a hurdle screen of grass faced the prevailing wind. While water was kept on this it was so cold inside that I had to have a blanket round my middle during the midday rest.

We were lucky in our trees ; there were many really fine banyans. Two of the biggest measured, in the circumference of their midday shade, 190 and 228 yards respectively. Parrots, green pigeons, and crows made these trees their haunt and were in some ways a nuisance. I made a point of building mounds to meet the down-coming shoots of these great banyans, thus hastening nature's beautiful process of extending their growth and ensuring their continuance for hundreds of years. In one tree we built up fourteen such. I pay a man a small annual sum for doing this to a favourite tree in the Kadir. But he is an idle rogue. The goats eat most of the shoots.

My friend B. had lent me two shikaris for this trip : Iseri Singh, a Thakur, and Ram Huruk, a

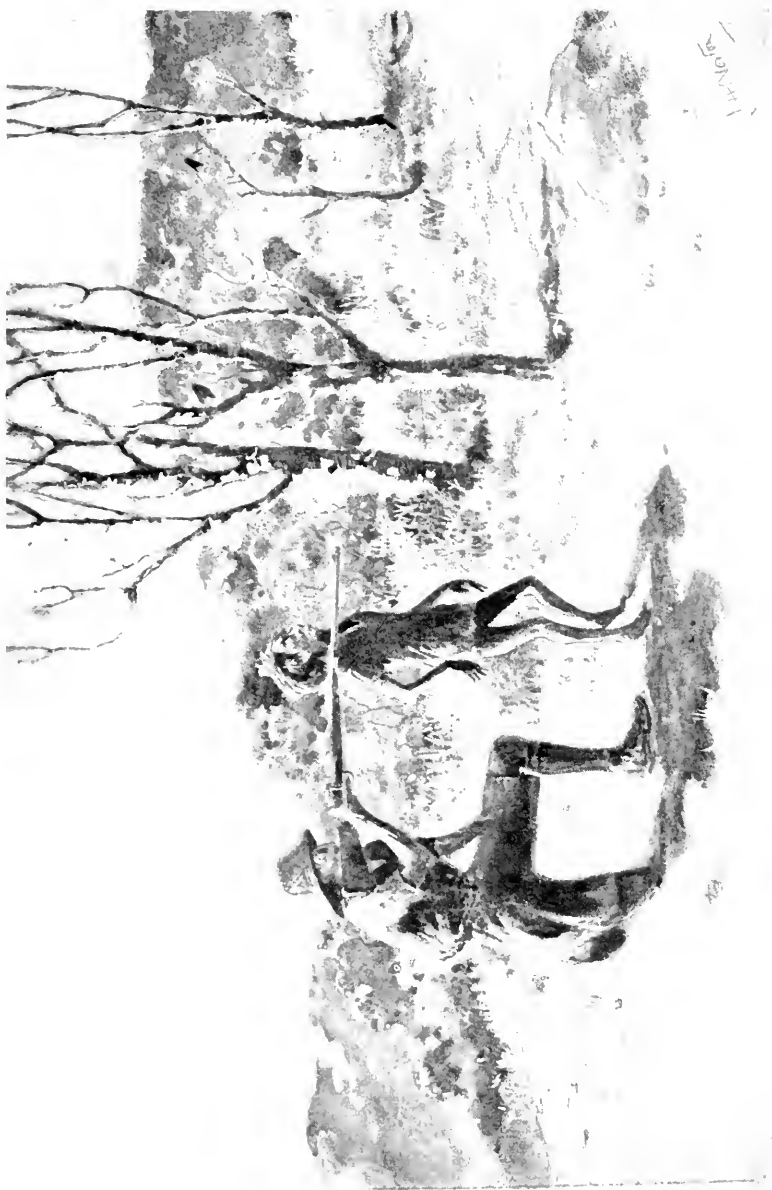
Bheliah, both of them Men — staunch, reliable tiger shikaris whose equal I have not seen. Ram Huruk was a silent man of the wilds, a desperately hard worker. Iseri Singh was a delicate man of refined and civilized type; highly strung, and always overworking himself, nerve and muscle, to the last degree. When beating for tiger it was his wont to be dressed in spotless white and to carry a little bamboo switch. This picture of him I carry now in my mind as he would arrive at the end of a beat, successful or not, handling his men with always the same half-humorous, half-acid smile on his lean keen face.

Our knowledge of the country was only gained as we went along. B. had sent out a reconnoitring party for me beforehand, but of the two shikaris who started, one died and the other came in delirious with fever and could tell nothing. B. himself had shot further in the interior, but we never reached so far. And indeed his notes would have been of little use, for he went in the cold weather when conditions and the localities of tiger are entirely different; for then the tiger leave the big jungles and inhabit patches on the plains, and are consequently easier to obtain than in the heat.

I left railhead on the 1st of April 1921, after the Kadir Cup, taking with me an Indian bone-setter, a masseur who made the nerves and muscles of my broken arm twang like fiddle-strings when he massaged me three times daily, completing the Meerut treatment.

At first it seemed that the services of a steady shrewd youth would be advisable, and that he

THE SERVICES OF A STEADY SHREWD YOUTH



should hold the rifle muzzle while I pulled the trigger. But finding most youths somewhat sketchy, I determined to rest the rifle on a cross-bar, and hoped not to have to do any following-up at first. Constant daily practice and massage soon improved matters. Indeed the only time I felt serious inconvenience was with the first tigress, on the 10th of April.

The beat was beautifully managed and the tigress came in at a swinging trot straight for my machân, but at more of an angle than I had expected. I could not get the rifle round, and made a clean miss at thirty yards. The tigress swung with a roar to her right at a gallop, but throwing myself forward I was able to get the muzzle to the left and dropped her dead with a raking shot. There were four of her cubs, as big as small panthers, in the beat. Two found their mother and refused to leave her. I did all I could to drive them off, but they would not go, and I had to shoot them to prevent injury to the beaters.

Previous to this a small panther killed a goat in a pen near camp, and dragged it through a hole about the size of a football. Both shikaris were away at work. I tracked this brute and, by a fluke, found his kill in a nullah some way off. I spent the day making a machân, sat up, heard crunching, turned on the light, and missed my friend at four yards' range with a ball out of a shotgun. This was one of those hopeless misses with which the devil afflicts me at intervals and which make life a burden. I was the more vexed, for I wanted to impress the shikaris with my skill in bagging a panther without any help from them.

I shot a second tigress three days after the first one. She came up a stream, gave an easy shot, and fell lifeless into the water which half covered her. Being nervous as to my shooting, I had arranged to shout results, and I did so at the top of my voice, thus driving out two male tigers that were also in the beat. This shouting was a great mistake. The guns cannot keep too silent after firing until the beat is over. A tiger will readily locate continued shouting though he may be uncertain of the direction whence he heard a single shot.

If, however, a wounded tiger goes back towards the beat, then the most powerful signals possible by voice or instrument should be used, and this should have one meaning only, "get up trees."

After this episode came a blank period, and we moved camp twice, getting *en route* a tiger kill in a barren and remote valley in the hills. I ran this myself, as the shikaris were ahead that day. On my final return I was not pleased to find the machân men sitting smoking under the tree. At 7 P.M. the tiger passed growling at some distance. This meant he would not come back. At 9 P.M. a panther came and I shot him by the electric light. He dashed off. At midnight a hyæna came and ate. At 3 A.M. another, or the same, hyæna ate and I killed him by mistake, for the light had run weak. At dawn a wild dog showed but gave no shot. We followed up and found the panther in a cave, after some beautiful tracking by the local men. Investigation showed the side of the panther visible through a hole, and I killed him. This was a big

male, and the .470 had almost blown off one hind quarter, poor beast.

A piece of country I was relying on turned out blank. We twice beat for a heavy tiger, but he was too good for us. In the previous month tiger had been troublesome here and had killed some of the inhabitants, so by the Maharajah's orders one of his shikaris had come and shot five of them.

One morning I heard that a bear was asleep in a cave above the camp. We crept up on tiptoe. I could see the sleeping beauty's chest through the front door, and a patch of his hide through a side crack. I chose the latter, and lying down took a pot shot at fifteen yards and hit the rock. The bear fled in a rage and I missed him with my left—a shocking affair, due, let us hope, to the damaged rifle which was still unrepaired.

The following night at about 3 A.M. a villager woke me saying a bear was feeding in a plain near camp. So I hopped out in my pyjamas and soon beheld the bear looming large in the full moonlight. He never saw me, and I made him turn twice by scratching with a finger nail. I shot him through the chest and put another bullet near his heart as he ran. I could have repeated the performance with a bear and a cub the following night, but did not do so on account of the cub.

Shortly after that we made a night march, starting at 7 P.M. and getting in at dawn. This was for Iseri Singh, who was ill with dysentery; but I was also glad for the small dog's sake. Iseri Singh rode, and I gave him brandy at

intervals. We had a sick child carried in a dhooly, and I wondered if he would die on the road.

In the early hours of the morning our path ran for some miles along the side of a stream, between it and a line of fringing cliffs. The moon was at its full; marching was pleasant. The path between the stream and the cliffs ran between shrubs giving forth a wonderful fragrance: the coolness of the night after the great heat brought forth all the scent. What flowers or shrubs they all were I do not know; jasmine was among them, the jungle flower that smells of honey, the champah odours, too, "like sweet thoughts in a dream," and others that I could not recognize. I shall always remember that beautiful scented moonlit march.

We had a quiet time in our new camp from the 25th of April to the 5th of May. We were after a man-eater most of the time and did no good. Iseri Singh gradually recovered, being cured by the Indian Esuf Gul seed when the English remedies had failed; but his own indomitable spirit helped him most.

We killed a tigress who refused to be beaten out and took refuge in a cave under high cliffs. I was called up and at first did not believe in her existence, until on looking down from the cliff I heard a roar. Many of the beaters were at the foot of the cliff. I hurried down and found that the tigress had put her head out of a cave and had roared at the nearest men, who were thirty yards away and separated from her by a gully. Luckily she did not attack. I took post on the gully and tried in vain to make her show again.

The tigress' cave looked like a big rabbit hole under some rocks, and she was probably in view from the mouth of it, but it did not seem a suitable occasion to "bell the cat." So Iseri Singh and I crossed the gully, swung up hill behind the rocks of the cave, crept to the top of it and sat like little mice. Ram Huruk withdrew the beaters, and they went off shouting. Within an hour of dead silence there was a roar from underneath us. The tigress sprang out, crossed the gully in a bound, and took a track leading along the foot of the cliff. On reaching some bushes she paused for a second to have a look and gave me a clear shot, which sent her spinning like a catherine-wheel down the hill with a bullet through her heart.

This was rather a professional show. Every one knew his job, and practically no orders were given.

Our next camp was in a village, and really hot. There were no suitable trees for miles. We stayed there a week, and at the insistence of some of the men I gave two rupees for "Poojah" to produce tiger. That night a tiger killed two of our tie-ups, and I spent the night keeping up a fire and holding on to my little dog in bed to protect him from a panther who made the night hideous with his "sawing" in and round the village. So we all felt we had had our two rupees' worth.

We never got the tiger: there were large and unexpected caves in the beat (bad reconnaissance). I deserved to lose this beast. The previous evening, Ram Huruk, who had been detached for some days, reported that he had come across the

tracks of a big tiger making for one or other of the nullahs on which we were tying up. Had I sat up I should have seen a daylight kill.

After this, two marches took us to a glorious camp under a grand tree, where we lived in comfort, forgetful of the last bad quarters, and where I had one of the finest times of my life, shooting seven full-grown tiger, ranging from 10' 1" to 8' 2", within one week, all in the same beat of country and from the same tree.

This, however, did not happen for a week. Meanwhile I shot a panther stone-dead under the electric light, and made a mess of a tiger kill. The kill had been dragged a few yards and was so wedged into and under a low bank that I thought there was no need to picket it. Still fastened round the buffalo's neck was one of the wooden bells with a wooden clapper that makes almost the noise of an ordinary deep-toned bell.

I went to sleep and was wakened by the booming of a bell. I rubbed my eyes and thought of church, and it took a little time before I realized that this was the bell ringing as the body was being dragged off. The kill was already out of the arc of the light. After several periods of ringing and silence I lost patience and stood up in the machân, and in poor moonlight could dimly see a long-bodied tiger mixed up with, and dragging, the kill. It was too far for an aimed shot. The tiger saw me at the same time, dropped the kill and went off. Next morning tracks showed that a tiger and tigress had been there, and the male stood at a safe distance up a side nullah while the lady dragged the kill.

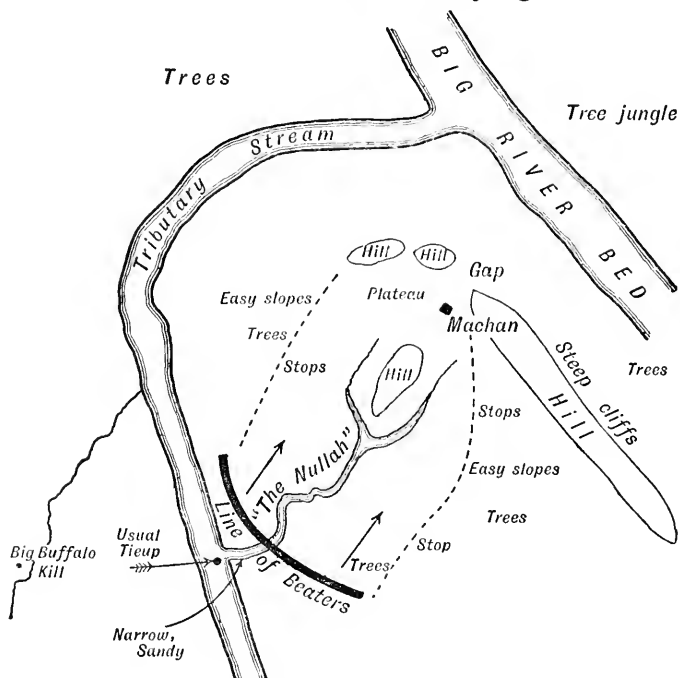
In this neighbourhood there flourished an interesting industry, unaltered since the days of Tubal Cain. The sand of the river-bed had iron in it, and I watched the whole process, within a few hours, of heating the sand, melting and running off the iron, and making it into an axe-head, which I have now. One man, the smith, worked on the furnace and forge, while his wife, a very pretty woman, and another girl worked the bellows with their feet, standing; and hard work it looked.

Food ran short, so one day we had a battue of haryal (green pigeon) from our tree, firing heavily. This was stupid in tiger jungle, but it turned out to be the best thing that could have been done, for it drove off the tiger from our tributary streams, across the big river-bed and into "The Nullah," where we got them.

This nullah ran into a tributary of the big river on the bank opposite to us. Where it debouched it was only a narrow sandy stream-bed. Higher up, the ground on either side of it rising rapidly, it mounted in a succession of rocky pools of water, amidst dense foliage and undergrowth which were almost hidden from the level of the surrounding ground. After some quarter of a mile of a winding course of this nature The Nullah rose again to ground level, and, bifurcating, surrounded the slopes of a little hill. On the upper side of this hill was a little plateau about 150 yards square. This plateau was really the end of a ridge, and from it a gap led down into the big river. The ridge itself had cliffs ten to thirty feet high on the river side and an easy slope on The Nullah and tributary side.

The Nullah was five miles from our camp, but with our good tree I would not move.

We discovered this place accidentally, owing to a tiger killing a village cow near to it. Ram Huruk heard of it when on outlying work, and



Sketch Map of "The Nullah"

Scale 0 1/4 1/2 3/4 1 Mile

marched at once; tied up at about 10 P.M. and got a kill that night. He stayed within a mile of the place from that time onwards.

Iseri Singh stopped in camp ready for kills elsewhere. He, of course, joined Ram Huruk daily on news coming in, and this arrangement worked well.

Ram Huruk's report with the news of the kill was that there were four tigers concerned in the matter. This was correct. For the first beat we made a big *détour*, covering about eight miles in all, to meet the assembled beaters and stops. We rectified this later, and used to meet the stops at the *machân*. The stops were well and quickly put out by the two shikaris in their usual fan-shaped method, opening out from the *machân*.

During the whole of this shoot, when beating I used a built *machân* with a basket stool. I am a great believer in a stool; but I am sure a little platform with rings is easier to put up and is less noisy than a *machân*. I had not one with me.

A noted tiger shot of thirty years ago told a friend of mine that he had shot 200 tigers beating, and that he always stood on a bough with a rope round his waist and the tree. He was free to shoot in any direction, could use any tree, and be ready in a minute.

But to return to the beat. After some time a tigress crept up towards my tree and I dropped her dead. A little later a handsome tiger appeared from the slopes on my right and came straight under the *machân*. I missed him as he came, jumped to the other side of the *machân*, and killed him as he appeared on the other side.

A third tiger came out from the same spot, but took a diagonal course at about eighty yards from me on my right rear. Vision was impeded by bushes and boughs in my own tree, which I cut away later. I got a difficult shot, however, and the tiger lurched but went on through the gap, giving me no chance to fire again.

The fourth tiger broke out of the beat and never reached the plateau.

We got the beaters away and found the place where the tiger had been hit. He had bled freely and had passed dung. A back stop on the gap said he saw blood coming from his side.

We went on too soon, not giving the tiger time to stiffen. It was getting late : we had five miles to travel and at least two tigers to skin. It was an inexcusable mistake to follow blood-tracks instead of keeping to the top of the cliffs of the long ridge. We thought the tiger was working down to the river. Instead, he had gone along the foot of the cliffs. We heard a roar from round an abutting corner of rock, and saw the silhouette of the tiger against the sky, but he disappeared too quickly for a shot. On reaching the top we continued following up, but could not get hold of him and had to leave him in the dusk. We got home late, and I skinned till long past midnight.

Had we left the tiger for a couple of hours, he would have stiffened and never moved. Had we gone along the top of the cliffs, I should have had an easy shot, and we should have avoided asking for a charge. This was really bad work, haunting the memory.

We were out at dawn next morning and took up the tracks again, but blood had ceased. The rocks showed no tracks, so we sadly gave up the hunt. I believe the poor beast had never reached the river and was dead in a cave beneath our feet.

We worked through all the ground of the

preceding day's beat and found a shallow cave that had been recently used by tiger. This should have been stopped had we ever dreamt of another tiger being in this beat.

At 10 A.M., as we were abandoning the follow-up, news reached us of two kills : one of a big village buffalo near The Nullah and another on one of our camp-side tributaries. I sent word to camp for my bedding and some food and drink to be sent to the scene of the kill of the big buffalo ; and then we collected men to beat for the other tiger. While waiting we lay on the river bank. Food and drink were short, and it was mighty hot. We had two beats. The first was a blank, the second held the tiger, who was lying up close to my tree. He roared and broke back, and I never saw him.

I then hurried off to the big buffalo and found that none of my kit had turned up and no machân had been made. It was after dark before I got things shipshape, and naturally no tiger came, though I heard him grumbling in the neighbourhood. None but a tiger of the largest size could have killed this buffalo.

In the morning we found traces of a really big tiger leading into The Nullah, and then we went home, glad to rest and look to skins.

Next day came news from Ram Huruk of another kill in The Nullah. We beat as before. A red tigress tried to get out over the ridge on my left, but was well turned by a stop. She then crossed my front and halted about a hundred yards away, covered by a tree, with only her head and quarters visible. I aimed in front of her

and fired as she moved. There was no apparent result, and she went off at speed over the brow of the plateau on my right and I missed her with the left barrel.

In another five minutes the big tiger himself walked past the machân at some thirty yards' distance, giving me time to watch him. I have seen no finer sight than the stately, bored swing of this great beast as he moved, with head bent down, ears back and tail drooping. My eye caught the rippling muscles of his shoulder like an instantaneous photograph. I killed him in three shots, and he died very savagely, splintering one of his big teeth on a stone.

I suppose my left arm was not yet taking its full share of the recoil of the .470, for the second shot broke my nose. I hurriedly put it straight again, but the third shot broke it for life, for I had no means of keeping it straight.

Iseri Singh, the immaculate, came up. "That's a nice tigress you've killed, Sahib," said he.

She had galloped over the brow and fallen dead with a bullet through her last rib.

The world went very well then.

The big tiger measured 10' 1" over curves, 9' 4" between pegs, girth 54", forearm, 18½". The tigress was 8' 2", and looked tiny beside him.

We skinned most of the night and were glad to rest the next day, but I had to sit up the following night over a kill on our side. Nothing came except my little dog Bhaloo, who had tracked me. I could not curse him for such fidelity, but I did not want him to stop. The situation was difficult.

In the morning on returning to camp I found news from The Nullah of another kill by a tiger, tigress, and cub. We beat, and the two last broke out, but the tiger came to the plateau, spotted me, halted, and after a longish pause galloped past the rear of the machân at forty yards. But all this part had been well cleared, and the .470 dropped him with a bullet through the hind-quarters, and killed him with a second in the chest. This was a handsome well-marked tiger, 8' 11½".

On the following day there was yet another kill in The Nullah, by a tigress this time. We beat as usual. The tigress came up the plateau from the right, saw me at once, and crossed my right rear diagonally at full speed in big bounds. I was lucky enough to hit her through the heart at the top of one of her bounds. She turned a complete somersault, landed on her head and fell spread-eagled, dead : a spectacular shot.

This really finished the week, and I was glad of a rest for a couple of days, for I was sick and giddy when I tried to walk, owing I suppose to the heat and the work.

There was a final kill in The Nullah by a tiger, but he took cover in the cave I have mentioned which we ought to have stopped, and when the beaters came up he sprang out amongst them and broke away, hurting no man.

We waited a few days, but nothing more happened there, and so with regret we bade good-bye to this wonderful nullah.

The shoot was now nearly over. We moved camp three times and then had to make forced

marches to the station, lest the rains should flood the rivers and stop our camel transport.

I shot a panther one day, sitting up. Another night I had a blank tiger kill, but watched a bear with some amusement; and we made a real mess of two tiger. Their ground was some miles from camp: the shikaris were late with the machân, and the tigers spotted me. They came the first night, nibbled, and went before I could fire. After that they played the devil with us. When the machân was empty they killed in daylight: when I was there they never came. Except when we beat for them, they lay up near. They ate four good buffaloes with all the honours of war. More power to them.

The only action to take in a case like this is to sit up, and go on sitting up, over live buffaloes. I had not time.

Much grateful mention must be made of my shikaris, for to them was due the success of the shoot. This is the only recent trip on which I have had good shikaris of my own.

I cannot too strongly urge any one going on a big-game expedition to take with him at least two expert shikaris, no matter what they cost. Such men will repay the expense over and over again. They are to be obtained from Hyderabad and the various other parts of tiger-shooting India.

Economy and a feeling of fairness seem at first sight to render the employment of local men only, desirable. But this is entirely unsound. Local men have no idea of the essentials of time and space. Their idea of a beat is to put the guns

at one end of a cover, mass several hundred men at the other end, set them off and hope for the improbable. As outlying shikaris they are inaccurate and cannot be depended on. I write this deliberately and with a full recollection of the many good local men I have had. But with the exception of a man called Permanand and one other, they all failed in higher tactics and were best fitted for subordinate work.

Good shikaris will be worth their pay in the saving on ineffective beats and useless tie-ups alone. Knowing that he has such men, the sportsman can rest, and need not always go round every kill and tie up every machân himself. He will then be fresh and ready for the real stress when it comes.

To conclude : I have written this chapter at length, not to boast, for we did nothing wonderful ; but to try to show the young generation the sport that is still to be had in India by an ordinary sportsman without the aid of high office, or other help than that of good shikaris and the cordial goodwill and assistance of the Rulers and people of the Land.

And this help, believe me, is still to be obtained throughout India by any keen sportsman who knows how to ask for it.

Good-bye, dear State, and kindly Maharajah. I see you often in my dreams. May I see you again in reality.

CHAPTER VI

A CHAPTER OF MISTAKES IN 1920

“Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better, sleep to wake.”

IN the preceding chapter I have talked rather big of success, but now I must indeed cry small; for in this shoot, a year before the one in that chapter, everything possible went wrong, and I made every stupid mistake that a man could.

But I shall always ascribe this as largely due to the Sacred Tank. This little tank, miles from any temple or Indian dwelling-place, lay on the fringe of the jungle near our forest bungalow, in the block where my wife and I had been given leave to shoot. The little old chowkidar said that the tank was sacred, and that it must never be disturbed. Alas, duck on the water were too tempting, and I shot some of them. Also I fired at and missed a four-horned antelope in the vicinity.

We got a kill in a few days on an isolated hill near civilization. As I went to sit up, some animal of the cat tribe crossed the fire-line in front of me, but it was too far for me to make out whether tiger or panther. I could find no satisfactory footprints.

The shikaris were away reconnoitring. They

were a pair who had been lent me. One of them was sick, and the other was an old man who had quite outlived his great and well-earned reputation. Both men are now dead, I am sorry to say.

I had run this tie-up myself, and suspected the kill might be that of a panther.

Before I had been sitting up an hour, a small panther stalked up to the kill, very cleverly, but with such an air of proprietorship that I regarded it as the criminal and killed it. I got down and hid the body, and went on sitting up in the vain hope that a tiger might come. In the morning there were unmistakable tracks of a tigress that had come to a certain distance and then turned off, presumably on hearing the shot. A bungled business.

The weather was getting warm, so we decided to march up to the hilly plateau, some 1500 feet high, which lay in our block. My wife went up at daybreak, driven in a little country ringhi cart, while I followed later, having seen off all the kit. My wife was escorted for part of the way by two jackals which ran behind her cart.

As they went up the ghât a panther crossed the road in front of them, climbed on to the overhanging bank at the side of the road, and sat there looking at them as they passed, and until they were out of sight. Neither my wife nor the bullock man had any weapons, and they kept their heads and did well, taking no notice of the panther.¹ But they were glad to be gone.

¹ Note by the Author's wife :—I cannot agree with the above account! Far from "taking no notice," I took, on the contrary, every notice. The driver and I stared at the panther, fascinated,

This ghât road was a good piece of work of the Forest Engineers. It was an excellent country road that ran from civilization through ten miles of rising and hilly forests, and then climbed to the plateau up the side of a long wide valley many hundred feet deep. This valley practically separated all our part of the plateau from the middle and lower jungles. It lay all along underneath the edge of the plateau, and made an unbeatable and almost inaccessible sanctuary for tiger, whence they could sally either up to the plateau or down to the jungles at the foot of the ghât.

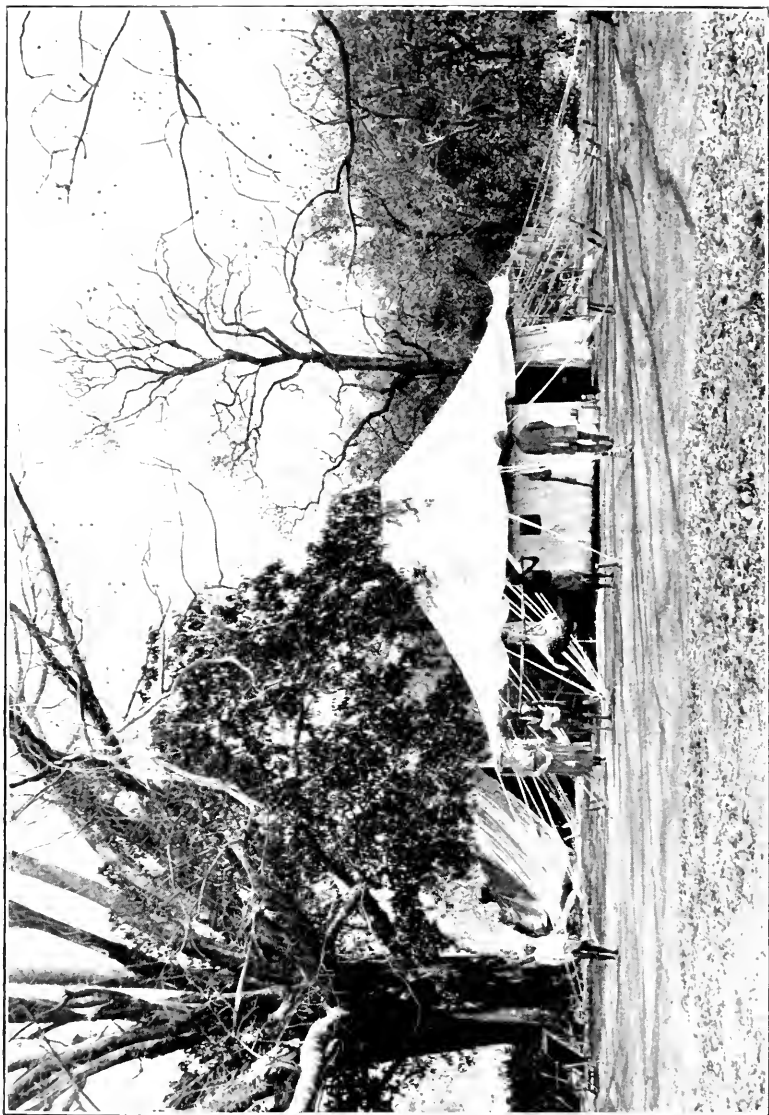
The plateau itself consisted of rolling downs, woody hillocks, and grassy dales, with a stream of water running through it. It is luckily too low to make a hill-station, for which it would otherwise be admirably suited.

The jungle was of the usual Central Province type, but looked very refreshing owing to the sheeshums and other similar trees, which were performing their annual miracle of putting out their fresh green foliage at the driest season of the year.

and he stared at us for what seemed a long time. I'm sure I should know him again !

We then tried to "shoo" him away by clapping our hands and shouting, but he made no attempt to move, and sat regarding us with slowly waving tail. Not being used to meeting wild beasts at liberty—face to face in this manner—discretion seemed the better part of valour, so we moved on. The panther remained in the same place watching us till the curve of the road hid him from view.

Later it was reported that a panther with cubs had been seen near this spot, so possibly ours was this female, and we may have got between her and the cubs, which might account for her curious behaviour.—A. C. W.



"OUR CAMP WAS UNDER TWO NOBLE PEEPL TRES WHICH TREACHEROUSLY SHED THEIR LEAVES."

Our camp was under two noble peepul trees, which treacherously shed their leaves as the heat increased and shade was required. Yet we summered very well here. A hot wind always blew during the day, and with well-watered grass screens in our E.P. tent, we had all the coolness possible in the hot weather.

At our door was the solitary Gond village. No one else lived on the plateau.

We had half-a-dozen tie-ups out; and the first morning before I had been round any of them, and we were still settling down in camp, news came in that a tiger had killed half a mile away, and was eating his kill in the open.

My wife and I hurried out, and at 8.30 A.M., from a distance of some three hundred yards, saw a tiger eating his kill in the open in the full sunlight. My wife watched events from this spot on a little hillock. She could see the ensuing stalk, and also the tiger as he lifted up the kill at intervals, shook and tore it.

The old shikari had a genuine cough, so the other man and I stalked up a nullah and into a little piece of jungle which ended a short distance from the tiger. We worked from the right, not knowing the ground. Had we crawled to our left and then swung right-handed, an easy grass approach and a shot at a hundred yards would have been obtained. As it was, crackling fallen leaves were a sore trouble. We got to within twenty yards of the far edge of the jungle, and I thought all was well, for a 'jungle sheep' got up a few yards on our right on the slope above us and walked away with its back to the tiger. We

could see the tiger eating, but there were so many intervening twigs that I feared the bullet would be deflected; so we made a final bound for a tree near the edge. I was leading, and just missed treading on a tigress lying down. She got up with a roar and went up hill, giving me a quick tail shot, which I would not take. The tiger, hearing the roar, followed fast in the same line, but exposed his right side diagonally. He was also straight above us and some thirty yards away. I did not fire: I wish I had. I did not then know the power of the .470.

That was the end of that affair. I was vexed, but was glad that my wife had had so good a view.

After that we reconnoitred all tie-up ground, and cut paths to allow of noiseless approach.

Only one place admitted of a beat. This was a nullah that rose in the high ground above the ghât valley, and ran down into the main stream that watered the plateau. There was beautiful green bush and tree cover with running water, and tiger would sometimes lie up here. Everywhere else they preferred to hop over into the big ghât valley.

We got a kill in this nullah, and beat, but I do not think the tiger was ever in the beat. This was bad work.

I let the men make a machân like a crow's nest among the bare branches of a big huldoos tree, which had good leaves on its top, and sat up. The big electric-light batteries had run down, and during all this shoot I had to sit near the kill, and use the ordinary flashlight torch. Moreover, my tree was on one slope of the nullah and

the tiger's approach was on the other at a height equal to my own. Naturally the tiger saw me, and I heard him cursing for a long time, as he went along the stream, with the jungle ringing and all the peacocks screaming in answer to his deep "aa-oonh's."

This "aa-oonh" is the most beautiful of all the tiger calls. It is distinctly a "call" and not a hunting note. It starts with a deep "aa," and the "oonh" is long-drawn and musical, and much higher pitched than the "aa." Like the hunting note, it has a marked vibrating sound. A strong nasal *n* runs through both call and hunting note. Both can be heard to a great distance in the stillness of the night. I have only heard this "aa-oonh" five times: once on this occasion, once when it was certainly a tigress calling to her mate (*vide* Chapter IV.), once when a tiger was returning home in the dawn, and twice in the jungle, when I knew nothing of the attendant circumstances.

The subject of tigers' calls is little understood; one recent writer says they seldom do call. I do not think he is right. In solitary camps and sitting up in the deep jungles, the voice of the tiger may be often heard; and I have frequently tried to put down the actual sound on paper at the time, or soon afterwards.

The hunting note I have spoken of is "Eh-unrh," with the second note much deeper than the first. Its object is to frighten game, and so cause it to betray itself to the listening tiger. But it is also used when a tiger is suspicious and has no intention of coming to a kill. The more silent

a tiger is, the more he means business. In the two kills by tiger of which I have personal knowledge, there was no call or roar on either occasion.

I have ventured to classify the two noises I have described. Whatever their object, there is no doubt, in my mind, that the two are entirely different and distinct from one another.

I have also once or twice heard a tiger make a sing-song humming noise.

In addition there is the well-known charging roar, sometimes almost a grunt. I believe that this generally means fear, and I suppose probably rage, on the tiger's part.

Also there are a variety of cat noises, yawn, spit, and growl, when two tigers are playing together.

I have never heard a tiger make a noise in any way resembling the "bell" of a sambhur.

Finally on this subject, in the matter of "speaking to a shot," I do not think this is any criterion whatever of a hit. Some tigers "speak" when hit, others do not.

To revert to the shoot, there were a couple of kills at another tree where the machân had already been put up, but neither with live nor dead animals would the tiger have any dealings with me when I sat up. Presumably noise or smell gave me away.

We had another kill in the only beatable nullah. The old shikari insisted on beating it down hill this time. This was anyhow a mistake, and in this case meant beating away from the tiger's line of retreat (which was to the ghât valley). Moreover, the machân was within fifty

yards of and below the dense cover to which the tiger had dragged the kill. The result was that as my wife was halfway up the tree she saw the tiger break out. I never saw him. He broke clean away, nearly, but unfortunately not quite, knocking over our cook, who had come out to watch proceedings.

The shikaris saw this tiger on the kill in the morning. Virtue being its own reward, I had not gone round the tie-ups this morning, as we had been up till late the night before, filing the ring off the toe of a poor little Gond girl, who was in much pain. This operation took three hours, with a pocket file, and by the light of a hurricane lamp.

After the beat I sat up for this brute in a high tree over the kill, which lay in the rippling stream. Owing to the water, I never woke when the tiger came, and only heard his departing crunches at dawn. My wife and I sat up again the following night. The tiger came blundering down, but I think heard me, and went off silently, giving no shot. He sing-songed as he passed our tree on his way home in the dawn.

Nightly tracks of tiger were now found on the ghât road. We first tied up on the road itself, and next morning found nothing but horns and hoofs left. A pack of wild dogs had eaten every bit of the tie-up. I tried for these pests and failed to get them.

Then we tied up where the road began to rise, and had a couple of beats, but in both cases the tiger had gone to his sanctuary.

I sat up after both blank beats. This is not

a bad thing to do, but it is tiring. On the first occasion I omitted to picket the kill, which had been dragged. I sat up in dense cover almost above the kill, and saw it vanish just as the light went. I never saw the tiger, and I believe the brute hooked the kill round a corner with his paw. He then munched away contentedly for hours, while I climbed about my tree, flashed the lamp, peered, and cursed.

On the other occasion the machân had to be a sort of spillikin jackdaw's nest, low down in a small clump of bamboos, which I hate, anyhow, for they always creak. I sat cramped and uncomfortable on the side of the road with my back to it, and facing the scene of the previous failure.

Soon after dusk I heard the tiger moving behind me on the bank above and across the road. The kill was very close, and fearing a dragging episode similar to the last, I determined to fire as soon as the tiger appeared. In moving my rifle I touched a tiny twig. The tiger, who had been advancing, swung round with a grunt, and departed for good.

Sad at heart, I curled up to sleep; and as the mosquitoes were bad, pulled a blanket over my head. I was awakened by the crunching of bones. It took me over twenty (timed) minutes to get silently into a firing position. There was a panther on the kill.

The torch, which I had tested and found correct when the tiger went, refused to act. The panther was suspicious, and ate deliberately round the kill, moving with the moonlight, to keep himself

in the dark. Then he gave a spring, walked under my tree, too directly underneath for me to fire, and was gone.

Again I slept, and the whole proceeding was repeated. I would not fire at the obscure outline in the dark, and so I never got him. This was my wife's panther, and I wish I had fired.

"Sahib, at any rate do fire, even if you miss," said the younger shikari. He was right: rifles that are never fired kill the enthusiasm of one's people.

The scene of interest then shifted back to the plateau. Going round one morning, we missed seeing a tiger who appeared to the men coming to untie the tie-up just after we had left.

There was then a kill in wild country on the edge of a stream with deep ravines. A sambhur "belled" at 1 A.M., and I was ready and waiting when the tiger loomed up in the moonlight. He gave the kill a tremendous tug and started eating. I turned the weak torch on to him, but it mingled with the moonlight and showed me nothing clearly. However, I risked a shot.

The tiger dashed off. I heard a heavy fall and a groan, and then all was still. Next morning we found much blood where the tiger had fallen in a faint, but no tiger. We followed up through awkward ground. The tracks emerged into the stream bed, which was some ten yards wide. Grass a couple of feet high grew in it. I believed the tiger was sneaking forward: I was convinced the grass was too low to hold him. Therefore I told the men to follow the tracks while I ran along the edge of the grass to a little bluff ahead.

On arriving there I found a second bluff beyond it. This had a better command of the further reach of the stream, so I was running to it when I heard a roar from behind the first bluff.

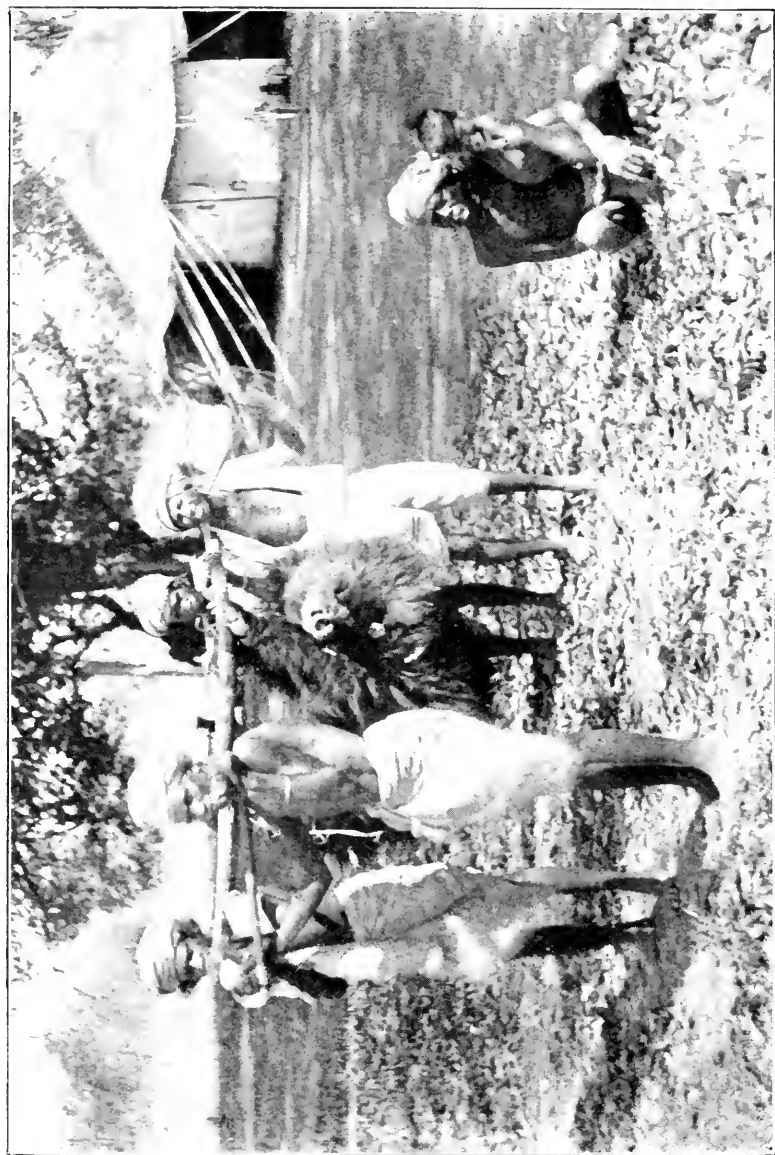
On approaching this bluff the shikaris had flushed the tiger out of knee-high grass. He sprang up the bank and got away over rocky ground. I never saw him, then or afterwards. The men said he showed blood on his left side, but I could find none and could get no tracks. The young shikari was sick, the old man was beat, and the local men were not keen.

My tactics here were as bad as could be. No matter what the temptation may be, when one is following a wounded animal there is only one possible place for the gun, that is level with the leading tracker, until the animal is retrieved or the hunt abandoned. (*See footnote at end of chapter.*)

My original shot was a bad one. I ought to have put out the torch and waited till the tiger was in such a position that I could get a certain shot.

The following-up as far as the main stream was correct and careful.

In following up, the important thing is to go from point to point in bounds. If there are two reliable guns one can cover the other. This is the only occasion on which they may separate. The points made for may well be ahead of the trackers if the country permits. The point being made good, the track is carried up to it. If the track goes into low ground or nullahs, the high ground first on one bank and then on the other



"ONE DAY I MET A BEAR . . . AND SLEW HIM."

should be searched before any one follows the tracks themselves. And above all, the gun must be level with the leading tracker, or, better, just ahead of him.¹

It was hateful to think of this poor wounded beast, and we waited a week to try and get him, but failed.

One day I met a bear on the path, and slew him to the surprise of every one, including the bear.

On another day we heard bears yelling, and, after a long run, came on them digging. One of them was upside down with his head in a hole. I knelt down and fired right and left with the .470, and missed. I nearly cried. The back sight of the rifle, I discovered afterwards, had been knocked almost a quarter of an inch to one side. This really ended the shoot, and I am sure it was about time.

I learnt much and enjoyed the days. But I offer sacrifice to all the jungle gods: and never again do I shoot on a sacred tank.

¹ It is interesting to compare this point with what Mr. Morris says on p. 149—A. C. W.

CHAPTER VII

MY FIRST TIGER

By C. W. G. MORRIS

I SAILED for India in February 1890 from Australia, to join my brother on his coffee estate, after having spent close upon five years in the latter country, where I had learned to shoot the rabbit and the native bear and to moon the "possum."

It was a proud youth that stepped on board at Melbourne, as my colleagues had presented me with a .450 Winchester repeater which the gunmaker assured me would shoot elephant. I was yet to live and learn, but I little realized what a trusty weapon it would prove, and that with it I was to bag my first "Bengal."

As, with the exception of six months in 1895, the whole of my time was spent on and within a few miles of my brother's coffee estate, I will first describe the country that I know and like so well. The description of it is, to me, the more interesting in that there were three totally different types of shooting ground lying at my feet, any one of which could be negotiated, and a morning's stalk for game prosecuted, by leaving my bungalow before sunrise and bending my steps as fancy chose.

My bungalow itself was situated on a hill surrounded by virgin jungle and grassy slopes. The forest was always green and cool. While out in the coffee clearings, in March and April especially, the sun would strike very hot, but there was always a cool breeze, and the moment you entered the shade of the jungle it was wonderfully cold—in fact to sit down, overheated from walking in the sun, was unwise, until at least you had walked yourself cooler. Visitors who came to our hills to escape the hot weather of Bangalore have declared we had an Italian climate. I never knew what it was to use a mosquito curtain, and a blanket at night all the year round was necessary. There was one lovely stretch of jungle through which a well-graded road wound for three miles. Many a time, during the hottest part of the year, have I ridden or walked along this road in a forest so dense and shady that the midday sun could barely penetrate and never be felt, everywhere green freshness meeting the eye, cool streams splashing at intervals, huge trees towering above one; to take a walk there was indeed a tonic—one's worries seemed to slide away. Of course in the south-west monsoon these shady spots were damp and perhaps uninviting; the leeches, too, were rather bad, but I have seen them much worse in other places.

The grass hillsides too had their beauty, especially when the young grass shot up in April or May. Many's the tough climb I have had up their sides.

From the bungalow, sambhur, bear, elephant, (and once a tiger) have been seen wandering along the slopes.

To the west of us lay the Malay Kadu about 1000 feet below. This is a jungle of coarse long grass, in the rains growing to the height of ten feet; except on the banks of streams where evergreen trees grew, the majority were deciduous, and for a couple of months, especially after the grass fires, the trees would have a bare, spectre-like appearance. I have done very little shooting in the Malay Kadu. Only three months in the year are good for shooting, the grass being too long at other times. The elephant and bison could be met at all seasons in this jungle.

The third type was the Naad or low country, which lay to the east, and could be reached by following a bridle-track for seven miles; this could be ridden nicely the whole way except where the road zigzagged at the steepest part near the foot of the hills, and then I only got off the pony going down; I always rode up the zigs. This was the country I liked best of all for shooting and in which I got the most and best sport.

On the road down the first sign of change was the teak, and lower still you entered the bamboo. Except for the first three miles where the road led through the virgin jungle I mentioned before, it wound along the side of grass hills. The scenery was grand; on the one side your eye would travel for miles over nothing but grass-clad sloping hills, many of them capped with virgin jungle. The road followed a mountain torrent. You crossed it by a bridge about four miles from the bungalow, left it on the right, unseen but within sound, until you reached the lower

plateau, where the road just touched its banks. Almost as soon as the bridge was crossed, you could see the Naad stretching for miles below you due east, until it was lost in the haze of the horizon. The Naad had always a great attraction for me. The game was more varied, and above all the tiger dwelt there. It is hard to say what is really the best time to be in these parts. When going far east, I found in November and December that sport was certain, whereas after that, from January till April of the open season, it meant failure. On the other hand, within ten miles of the hill range running north and south, the month of April was hard to beat. The grass is then short and the mango showers rendered the ground excellent for stalking, besides bringing up the young grass shoots.

To shoot in the low country one must be able to endure much greater heat with very little shade, and in the bamboo any amount of mosquitoes. I have been terribly bitten by them, even in the day-time in some of the denser bamboo parts. When once the Naad was reached, you were wrapped in, so to speak, and your perspective was circumscribed. The grass consisted chiefly of spear-grass. Open spaces for any distance were few and far between, the timber chiefly small and deciduous, with innumerable thickets scattered about. Here and there were river-beds, whose banks were shady with bamboo, wild mango, and tamarind trees. Such surroundings constituted the Naad, and here one might expect to see anything from an elephant to a moose deer.

My bag for 1890 only comprised two four-horned mountain antelope, although in May my brother gave me an opportunity of seeing big game in the Mysore Malay Kadu, where I wounded my first bison. But alas! that day proved that a Winchester was not the rifle to use at bison, and that no rifle is of any use in the hands of an untried excited sportsman. Just as I commenced to descend a grassy slope, I came suddenly on a herd of gaur or bison, and then the fun began; to take aim never entered my head. I was literally surrounded by these brutes, and learnt in after years that bison often do this when they are uncertain as to what they are dealing with. My brother told me afterwards that he thought the battle of Waterloo was on, and I reckon my rifle repeated pretty often. When I had dispersed the herd my shikari cast round for tracks, and found blood, strangely enough too, from a big bull, but my brother who followed up later did not come up to him.

My first four-horned mountain antelope caused me great joy. These little buck favour grassy hills and are very keen of sight, necessitating a long shot. There was a hill within a mile of the bungalow named after these graceful animals. Nearly every morning and evening found me on this hill, often having a shot and always missing. One evening I wandered off alone, as usual taking the west side which sloped down right into the Malay Kadu 1000 feet below us. When about three parts down I espied an antelope and fired, when it rushed helter-skelter almost to the level of the plateau below. I felt I had hit at last,

and sure enough found blood and, further on, the animal itself dead. I was so delighted that I did what I would hesitate to do again. I tied its legs together with my handkerchief and slung it on my rifle. I toiled up that hill and did not reach the bungalow until long after dark. Only the buoyancy of having shot one at last kept me up. It weighed 60 lbs., so you can imagine how stiff I felt for days afterwards.

What I always look upon as my first real shoot since landing in India took place in February, when I left for the Naad on a ten days' shoot, which ended in being only three and a half days, as on the fourth an urgent "chit" came down to say my brother was very poorly and was going to Coimbatore to see a doctor. In those three and a half days I shot six spotted deer stags (chital). The last chital of that trip to fall to my rifle was the biggest I have shot in the whole of my career in India. The antlers measured 36 inches, and were in prime condition, with a few shreds of velvet still on so that the beading was perfect. I had taken on a local shikari, by name Poota Madha, a Shivasha, therefore a man of high caste, who could not touch meat. He was wonderfully sharp-sighted, but had two glaring faults in my opinion—he was almost stone-deaf and walked much too fast, long experience having taught me that the man who saunters sees the most, and gets the best chances.

Now for the big stag.

We had wandered all over the jungle without getting a chance of a shot, by which time we had neared a favourite haunt of the chital; but it

was now 10 A.M., when deer have mostly taken cover, so, hearing some pea-fowl calling ahead in the direction we were going, and quite forgetting that probably Poota Madha—who held my shot-gun—had not heard their cry, I was expecting every moment to see these gorgeous birds, when suddenly my gun-bearer dropped on to his knees, I following suit as quickly as possible. With my whole mind on pea-fowl, I tried to wrench my scatter-gun from the shikari, whose only reply was “Fire, fire, don’t you see the ‘barre hore’?”—*i.e.* big stag. Looking in the direction he indicated, my heart jumped into my mouth as I saw a large herd of these beautiful deer slowly grazing forward, with several good heads in the herd and one exceptionally good stag nearest to me, who, with head erect and antlers branching over his back, looked majestic, very dark in colour and the neck almost black. I was trembling so with excitement that I muttered a heartfelt prayer for my bullet to carry true as I took aim and fired. My stag had vanished, and Poota Madha was positive I had missed, but when he told me that the whole herd had run off in one direction and the stag had dashed off in another, I was equally sure that I had hit, so insisted upon following the tracks most carefully, although there was no sign of blood. We had not followed far when the stag himself proved he was hit by jumping up and rushing off, without giving me a chance to draw a bead. Where he had lain down were the unmistakable signs of a paunch wound. In my shakiness I had pulled to the right, my favourite shot being just behind the

shoulder blade. He broke away a second time, but presently we caught sight of him lying down before he was sufficiently alarmed to break again. We crouched down, and then gradually stole towards the quarry until within easy shot. For a few moments I could not help watching and admiring his fine head, but it was a sad sight too, for he was sorely stricken, as shown by the way he drooped his head, only to raise it again, as if fighting against the faintness that was overtaking him. To put him at once out of his pain I took careful aim for his neck and fired, and his head fell to rise no more. With such a head my forced return to the estate was softened considerably. Perhaps, too, it was all for the best, as a few days later I was taken with most appalling ague, and one morning found I had got "blackwater," which is most rare in India, only following a long attack of fever. It was so in my case, as, contracting fever in May of 1890, I had had it off and on ever since, and had taken no quinine to stop its inroads on my constitution. How I rode thirty miles, travelled another forty in a jutka to catch the train for Bangalore, reaching there the following evening, remains a mystery, as after seeing the doctor I fainted dead away and hovered between life and death for several days, so that I was packed off to the Madras hospital under the care of a nurse. There I promptly began to pick up and left the hospital towards the end of March, so saturated with quinine that reading was impossible, the letters only showing as a blur.

On the 27th of December I brought my first

sambhur to book. How pleased I was ! There was a favourite grass hill patched with jungle here and there, where this grand deer likes to lie up during the heat of the day. The hill was only some three to four miles off, and on that evening I was coming along the side about half-way down, when my tracker espied some natives passing the opposite side of a bit of jungle, thereby giving their wind to anything that might have lain up. Sure enough three sambhur bolted out, running up the hill and turning towards us, so we crouched down in the grass ; by good luck they passed right above, but within shot of us, so, picking out the only stag, I pulled off and saw him jump forward only to disappear into a hollow, where we found him stone dead ; a well-placed bullet behind the left shoulder had terminated his career. It was not a good head, but its being the first of the kind goes a long way with the beginner. The size of the animal, its long coarse hair with neck-ruff standing out—a feature which looks so well on a good mounted head—were all points of interest. The feet make splendid jelly, but the meat is decidedly coarse. The skins tan into very decent leather for shooting-boots, but are so soft that in wet weather the leather gets soppy.

My first experience of tiger-shooting was certainly the funniest. I am not sure of the date, but know it occurred in this year (1891), so I will relate what took place as a finish to this chapter. The bridle-track to the Naad, which was made more especially for the carriage of grain from the low country for the purpose of feeding the

coolies on the estate, was at the time of the incident under repair. Every morning I rode out to see how the work was getting on. It must have been some time in November, towards the end probably, as we did not repair roads until after the heavy rains of the nor'-east monsoon. Anyway, one morning I found the coolies—who by that time were a good four to five miles off—in a great state of excitement, declaring that they had actually seen a tiger and that a cow had been killed at Nelli Kather Hutte, where there was a small Sholaga hamlet. Soon after a couple of Sholagas turned up and confirmed the news. I rode back to the estate to get my gun, rugs, and food for a night's vigil. Dod Cara, a Sholaga, volunteered to accompany me. He prided himself upon being a professional shikari who had taken numbers of sahibs out shooting, so off we started in the afternoon. I reached the hamlet, from which I took three or four men to build a machân, and proceeded to the place of the kill, which lay in a fine open spot; trees were very scarce, and the only available one was a very pliant nelli tree, a species very abundant in these parts, and from which the hamlet took its name. Where there was no choice, needs must, so I gave directions to build the platform as quickly as possible—there not being much time before darkness would overtake us, except that there was a glorious moon, of which I wished to take every advantage. I must honestly confess that I knew nothing about tiger-shooting at this period, least of all sitting up over a kill, so when the work was finished I asked Dod

Cara if I should not sit up alone ; he scoffed at the suggestion, and to my surprise told me that he with two other Sholagas were going to share the watch with me. I was taught a lesson that night I never forgot, and ever since have insisted upon sitting up alone or occasionally with one other, though I hold to the former being the best, *i.e.* by yourself. Nothing appeared for hours, and at last Dod Cara volunteered to keep watch while I took a snooze. Needless to say, we all went off sound asleep. Some time later, it appears, one of the men was roused by the sound of bones being crunched, and looking down saw the tiger enjoying his meal. Instead of rousing me at once, he violently shook his neighbour, and he in turn shook Dod Cara, by which time the tree was swaying to such an extent that the tiger looked up in astonishment to see what was happening. By the time Dod Cara had brought me out of dreamland, the tiger was so appalled at the commotion that all I saw was a tawny object with tail erect vanishing out of sight as if the devil was after him. Dod Cara shook his head mournfully, and said there was no hope of the tiger's return. We all went to sleep again, and the tiger returned and dragged the carcass out of sight, and I went back to the estate next morning a sadder but a wiser man.

On the 19th of June 1892 I got my first jungle sheep or barking deer. Many a time have I stepped into the verandah of my bungalow to listen to this deer's peculiar bark. The Sholagas say he barks at the patter of his own feet in the

leaves. When wounded, the male is a terrible brute to cut up a dog.

On the 13th of November I secured my first tiger, or rather tigress, and as with her I got a magnificent stag sambhur whose horns measured 37 inches, it was a memorable day.

I left the little bungalow before daybreak with my two favourite Sholaga trackers; there was a bright moon and a good path for the greater part of the way to the plateau where I intended stalking, so that by dawn we found ourselves within half an hour's walk of our ground. Here several freshly dug holes showed that bears were about, and we proceeded more cautiously. The foot of the hill was almost reached when suddenly the clear, loud bell of a sambhur rang out on our right; a few seconds later, another bell only a few hundred yards off; and we crept towards the spot, but had not moved far when our steps were arrested by a crashing among the bamboos, followed by a third cry from the sambhur, but not a bell this time; it was a hoarse, long-drawn roar of pain and fear. "Something has seized it," whispered the leading tracker, and then they both muttered "A tiger!" I urged them to go on, and as we started off, again there came that awful cry from the sambhur. We pushed on as noiselessly as possible till within perhaps a hundred yards of the spot, when once more, and for the last time, came this fearful cry, such a cry as I had never heard in my life before; it made me shudder. Afterwards I knew that it was the dying call of the poor stag struggling hopelessly with his terrible adversary.

We were in a gorge that led up into the hills, and the sound of this last cry, which was extraordinarily loud and long, seemed to echo and re-echo all round us, and to fairly fill the air. I saw the two Sholagas look at each other perfectly aghast. I believe they thought it was an evil spirit. However, in the dead silence that ensued, we pulled ourselves together and stealthily approached a large clump of bamboos, from which we expected to see what was happening or to look on what had already been done. On reaching the clump the tracker Kanni-Madha peered round, and then instantly crouched back, saying, "Sir, sir, look at the tiger!" I had felt he was going to say that. Quietly I stepped forward and took his place. I shall never forget the sight I saw on looking round. There in a little glade stood a grand tigress, quietly surveying the body of the stag sambhur she had just killed. As I raised my rifle I noticed that her sides were heaving; she was panting from the exertions of the struggle. I pressed the trigger, and she vanished. It was as if I had only been gazing on the picture thrown by a magic-lantern on a screen, so instantaneous was her disappearance. But presently, and almost before the smoke blew away, a sound of struggling in the bamboos below us told that the bullet had done its work. Well, we all got pretty excited then. I know we went down to her very carefully, and I fired a second shot into her dead body to make sure, and then heaved a big stone at her, and I remember gently touching the glazing eye with a twig to

be absolutely certain she was lifeless. I have also a distinct recollection of hugging the great round head in my ecstacy of delight, but if I did anything else during the next half-hour, I cannot recall it.

CHAPTER VIII

VARIOUS GAME : MY BROTHER GORED BY A BISON

By C. W. G. MORRIS

ON the 5th of April 1893 I shot a really fine stag sambhur, fine, at least, for the district I write about. It was at the same hollow where I shot my first deer of this species. The great difficulty about bagging sambhur is their reluctance to being in the open by daylight. In the evening they generally came out when it was almost dusk, and as for the mornings, only on rare occasions have I been early enough to find them in the open. On this particular occasion I had determined to spend the night in the vicinity, and long before daybreak, by a good moon, had taken up my position within half a mile of this favourite hollow, thinking that as I was opposite a piece of jungle which I must cross when the light was good enough, I might possibly see a stag by moonlight. The sit-out was very cold and very weird ; some ice birds kept up their incessant call (so named because their cry is just like the noise a pebble makes when thrown on the ice), chuck, chuck, chucking in the distance. Once a sambhur evidently got

our wind and belled defiance. At last dawn began to show, and we made a move down the slope to cross the neck of jungle, listening very carefully, as elephants were about at this time of year. Hearing no sound, we picked our way through the jungle, which, except for the light of the moon, was almost pitch dark. We reached the grass hill on the other side and proceeded very cautiously, as there was still insufficient light to see for any distance. We had not gone far when my man, Naad Kerta, crouched down, pointing to the side of the hill opposite us; of course I at once followed suit, and lay as low in the grass as possible. I saw three doe sambhur already on their way to cover, but looking inquisitively in our direction. After a bit they began to "bell," stamping with their forefeet. By this time I had taken my field-glasses, and was surveying the hollow below, from which I knew the does must have come. How my mouth did water as I saw a small stag and one lordly fellow looking up towards his harem! but he, not having seen the danger, refused to budge, so finally the does trotted up the hill. We dared not move, but anxiously waited, hoping the stag would follow the does. This would have brought him into nice range of my rifle. He had evidently made up his mind to lie up by himself, as after a while both stags moved off in the opposite direction, and we had to lie low until they crossed a ridge. Kerta whispered to me that the moment they crossed we must run for all we were worth to get ahead of them, but keeping on our side of the ridge, so as to be out of sight until we reached a

certain point of the saddle, where we could get a good view of the country. I handed my rifle to my guide, so as to be hampered as little as possible. When they finally disappeared, up and off we went. How we did run! At first it was fairly easy going, partly down gradient to a hollow, but the pace told on us when we had to climb. At last we reached a point where Kerta thought it was safe to cross cautiously and crouching low. We took a careful survey of the country behind, but saw nothing, so hastened on to get a good view in front, but there was no sign of our quarry. Kerta, absolutely blown, threw himself on to the ground, saying he could go no further, and, pointing to a small circle of shady jungle, said that if the sambhur had not gone right down hill towards the Naad, which was unlikely, they must be in this patch. Taking my rifle, I walked straight towards it as noiselessly as possible, but not attempting to conceal myself, as I knew if the sambhur was lying up there would be no attempt at budging until it was clear I was making actually for the jungle. I had only to cover a short distance which would bring me within rifle range of any point from which game might break. At last I got sufficiently near, and stopped to listen; hearing no sound, I moved on a few steps, when I distinctly heard the snap of a stick. This pulled me up short, and next moment, hearing the rush of an animal, I threw my rifle up, praying it might be the royal head; another second showed me that it was so, and what a grand sight he presented as he swung out with head in air! Letting drive as he went

off, I had the satisfaction of seeing his hind-quarters give way, my bullet hitting him in the small of the back. I threw my hat up into the air with joy, and, shouting for Kerta to come on, rushed forward to give the stag the *coup de grâce*. Although the horns were not so long as those the tigress got for me, they were very widespread.

On the 9th of April 1893 I had an extraordinary day. I determined to visit the low country, and we made such an early start, Kerta and I, that we were in the Naad by sunrise. We stalked all over the place, and it was getting very hot, when we suddenly came on a nice stag chital, paying delicate attentions to a doe. I dropped him on the spot with a shot in the neck, and with a scream of fright the doe dashed off.

Being more than satisfied, after having taken the head off for preservation, I decided to have lunch, so seeing a nice shady tree some distance off, I told Kerta to follow me there. On reaching this tree, which was on the bank of a dry river-bed, I told Kerta to hand me my lunch. As I spoke I heard a rustling below me; we both peered down, and caught a glimpse of a tiger slinking off. The rustling commenced again; this time I was more prepared, and let drive at a second tiger, which I wounded, but it was very nasty shooting sheer below me with a lot of bushes intervening. We both looked at each other in amazement, to think of two tigers lying at our feet. Clambering down, we hunted round, and sure enough found blood, but very little, and at last we had to give up the quest in despair. On our way home I secured a mountain antelope, and have

always looked back upon that as a record day, when I saw two tigers, besides securing a chital and an antelope.

My bag for 1894, while very small, had been fairly productive of excitement. In March, for instance, my record book shows the death of three panthers and the wounding of a fourth.

Sitting up for a panther is not nearly so satisfactory as for a tiger; the former seems naturally to look out for its enemy in a tree, and the number of times I have been discovered and lost a shot have made it most disheartening work. What has always struck me is the marvellous way in which "Spots" will creep up and appear suddenly almost on to the kill. About a mile from the bungalow by the short-cut, lay Gunguru Kanawé (where Garstead now is), the latter word meaning saddle, a place much frequented by tigers and panthers, which come up the path that crosses the saddle from the Malay Kadu into our hills.

During March, which is the hottest and driest month of the year, the grass is nearly always swept by fires, so that cattle become very poor in condition; each year generally claims a few victims.

On the 10th of March a herdsman reported that the previous evening he had been forced to leave behind a cow which was too weak to follow the herd to the kraal, and the next morning on going to look her up he found a panther had seized her. I went down to the place, chose a tree, and gave instructions for a machân to be built. At 3 P.M. I again started for the place and found everything had been done most satisfactorily.

Owing to the amount of dry leaves about, I made sure I would easily hear any animal on the move, but kept a careful look out. Suddenly, before sunset, without a sound to warn me of the approach, I saw a panther close up to the kill; how it stepped over the leaves so silently was a marvel, but there was the brute within shot, and I did not take long to get a line on to it, and number one was mine—a female.

I left the cow there, telling the Sholagas that they must report at once if anything came. For three days the carcase was unmolested, but on the 14th it was reported that the body had been visited during the night, so off I started again. I think there is nothing more sickening than having to sit over a kill that has been dead some days; the stench is awful. Anyway, another female panther was added to the list. On the 17th one got off wounded, and on the 19th the third fell to my rifle—this time a male and of fair size, measuring from tip of tail to nose 7 feet.

On the 15th of April I went down to the low country (Naad) for a few days' shoot, and took with me a 12-bore rifle, which a planter, who was great on Meade's shells (*i.e.* explosive bullets), had lent me in exchange for my own rifle, as he wanted to try the accuracy of my .450 and Lyman's sight. It was a bad day for me that I exchanged rifles and, worse still, used Meade's shells, which are, I think, much too light to penetrate if any great resisting object is met. When I reached my camp, a local native told me that a tiger had seized a cow, and, from the tracks at a pool of water, it looked as if two tigers had been

guilty of the deed. After breakfast I started for the scene of the kill, and found that the body had been dragged into a thicket, so that it was completely hidden from view. Selecting a good tree for the machân, I had the cow dragged to the open, and left word how to erect the platform, returning myself to camp to get over the heat of the day.

Between 3 and 4 P.M., I proceeded once more to the place, and, finding everything in order, clambered into my perch, dismissing the shikaris with instructions to return on hearing my gun fired. About 5 o'clock, while the sun was still fairly warm, I heard the sound of a heavy animal forcing its way through the undergrowth, and from the noise never dreamt that it was a tiger, although it came from the direction in which I expected the tiger to appear. I had not long to wait ere the animal appeared in view, and it was the tiger, and a huge one too. It had passed the place where the cow had been, and pulled up just inside the edge of the thicket. On seeing its meal, which was securely tied to a tree, it gave a grunt and sprang a little back; as my eyes instinctively followed its movements, I espied a smaller tiger—I should say a tigress—just behind its mate, so there were two! I could not get a shot at the bigger animal, owing to trees and bushes hiding the vulnerable spot, so had to bide my time. At last he moved a little forward exposing his shoulder. I took careful aim and fired, flooring him on the spot. I made absolutely sure of having bagged him, and when his mate jumped right out into the

open and paused to see why her spouse was making such a row—as he certainly was, tearing the ground up and biting anything in his way—I clean forgot I had a second barrel, and might at least have made sure of one if not two tigers, for she exposed the whole of her left side in the most tempting manner; I never fired, and she bolted. I could not fire at the wounded one, as the moment he fell the undergrowth concealed him, so I had to await further developments. Finally, he recovered his feet and came floundering straight for, and passed under, my tree. To be perched on a machân and try to shoot right below is most difficult, and my bullet just hit the ground behind him, exploding with a loud clap. Why prolong this harassing tale! I saw no more of that tiger from that day to this, although I followed up the tracks next day, but the ground was burnt as hard as a brick and the blood soon ceased. Moral: Do not use a light Meade's shell on the shoulder of a tiger. Undoubtedly the bullet exploded on the surface; of course, if I had got in behind the shoulder, between his ribs, the shell would have done its work. I returned to the estate vowing I would never use other than my own rifle in future.

In December I left my brother, to join an estate in the Mysore district, to learn planting under other conditions; after coffee, I was now to see cardamom and pepper planting.

I had been there barely four months when, on the 25th of April, I got an urgent telegram telling me my brother was dying, having been gored by a bison, and I must come at once.

I travelled night and day, by bullock cart, train, and horseback, and was back to the hills I knew so well within four days. My brother was alive, but a terrible wreck, the horn of the bison having caught him in the back, penetrating his right lung and smashing two or three ribs, one of which had to be taken out as a floating bone. Thanks to the kind offices of the R.A.M.C., Bangalore, who heard that no civilian doctor could be spared to stay with him, Captain S. took leave, and spent it beside my brother, thereby saving his life ; his chief, then Major L., had arranged the matter for us. I left for Mysore territory again about the end of May, with the knowledge that my brother was out of danger, and on the understanding that I was to take over the estate during his enforced absence to recuperate from the shock.

CHAPTER IX

BEAR, BISON, SAMBHUUR, AND DISAPPOINTMENTS

By C. W. G. MORRIS

DURING April 1896 I was doing some road-tracing with a chum of mine, Francis F., and we had a very jolly time together, not unmingled with excitement.

On the evening of the 3rd of April, after a hot day's tracing, we decided to have a look round for sambhur, as the hills, especially on the east side of the road, were favourite resorts. There was a long range of mountains stretching north and south, which meant very stiff climbing to reach the best haunts. We climbed up together about half the distance, when, by mutual agreement, he went to the right and I held to the left. I had just reached a nullah where the jungle from the top gradually tapered to about the width of the ravine. My Sholaga had selected a narrow part where the crossing would be easier, and we were pausing to hear if any animal was on the move, as elephants were always wandering about here; we had listened barely a breathing space, when I heard a great noise of some animal shuffling down towards us, inside the jungle. I at once exclaimed "elephants"

in a whisper, but after listening carefully my shikari said "No, it's a bear; be ready, it is coming towards us." Fortunately the jungle at the spot we had selected was so narrow that no animal could pass without being seen. I was tremendously excited, as so far I had not bagged a full-grown bear, and I made up my mind my chance had come. A few moments decided it, and out walked a huge male bear within twenty yards of me, a splendid broadside shot, and I let him have it square behind the left shoulder. With a fearful roar he seemed literally to roll out of sight; we waited a moment, but hearing no noise went cautiously inside the cover and found the bear stone dead. To say I was pleased was putting it mildly, as to bag a bear within half an hour of having left camp was quite unlooked-for luck. Poor old Francis returned without having seen a thing.

On the 9th he and I went off together in the direction I had gone on that memorable evening. We had covered about three-quarters of the distance, when the guide drew our attention to two bears coming along the face of the hill towards us. We hastily arranged a plan of action, which was that Francis should take the front bear, but not until the other had come into view. The bears came along quite unsuspectingly, and we were both ready for them—I with a 12-bore and Meade's shells, worse luck, and he his D.B. .450 Express. Both bears came into view, and as I was taking aim, bang went Francis's rifle from behind me, which made me jump, so I had to take aim again, the bears coming

on unharmed ; bang again from Francis, and both bears were practically on the top of us, kicking up a most awful row. The Sholaga was already half-way up a tree, and I heard Francis shout, " Fire, fire, Charlie, they are on us." By this time the bears were just level with me, with no intention of turning. I plugged one of them, when with roars they started biting each other, and as they turned I let drive again. It was most disastrous, and I swore I would never use Meade's shells again, as, though blood was showing and I followed them up to noon of the next day, we did not account for either.

On the 17th I bagged my biggest bull of the trip. We had started very early in the morning, and had no sooner got to the top of a hill than Madha espied a bull bison. I took my glasses and looked carefully all round, but could only see the one, so decided it must be a solitary, and if so, an extremely fine one from its size. Solitaries, too, are always old bulls which are driven out of the herd by males that are more in their prime. The following-up and bagging of a solitary is far and away the cream of bison shooting, as one has to deal with an irascible old curmudgeon, and then again there is no chance of having one's labour spoilt by a cow discovering one, as so often happens in following a herd.

Madha led the way with unerring intuition, and soon brought me on the track of our quarry. Pointing ahead, he signed to me to crouch down, and led me to a rock, behind which I hid, and on carefully looking over I saw a sight that made

me wonder if the place was not a bit too hot for me, as there was my bull throwing up the dust with his horns, and coming, as it appeared to me, straight for my place of concealment, tossing his head from side to side, with every manifestation of wrath. I, of course, concluded he had seen our crouching forms as we crept up to the rock. Anyway, I was prepared for him, and just let him come on to within a few paces. The only target he offered was his broad forehead, and I let him have it straight in the centre with my Ubique, bringing him down on to his knees. He recovered almost at once, and commenced staggering round as if he were drunk, evidently dazed and stupid from the shock, so I livened him up with the left behind the shoulder, when off he lumbered. Hastily loading, I hurried forward, and found myself literally surrounded by bison, while Madha was warning me to take care, and trying to attract my attention to another bull. This explained the extraordinary behaviour of my bull. Just before we had got up to him, a herd must have come in his direction, and the old fellow wished to dispute possession of the herd. On our right was a hollow which had concealed the herd from our view.

We were yet to see a still stranger thing! The herd, with tails in air, had charged down the hill and disappeared out of sight, but as we advanced to look for the wounded bull, a wonderful sight met our eyes. There was the herd bull—having forsaken his harem—deliberately horning the wounded fellow off the place. My bull, with the other one close on his heels,

was passing just below me, offering a beautiful broadside shot, so I fired a right and left in quick succession, both bullets taking effect, and off he dashed, the other one still following him. They both made for a heavily wooded nullah. The first bull evidently pulled up there, but we saw the other cross the river-bed and mount the open on the opposite side. It was ticklish work when we reached the bank, as it was densely wooded, and the wounded animal might be in wait anywhere. There was no good hesitating, as our only means of locating him—apart from actually following his tracks, which would have been most dangerous work in such cover—was to cross to the other side, where the ground was very steep, thereby enabling us to look down into the bed of the river. We got across all right, and were not long in locating him. Evidently hearing us, he moved out, and on firing, I distinctly heard the smack of the bullet as if hitting a brick wall. He faced round on me with the evident intention of being aggressive, but the steep incline he had to negotiate before he could reach me was evidently too much for him after the severe buffeting he had had, so he turned off down-stream and disappeared out of view; and that was the last bullet he got, as soon afterwards he was in his death-throes. He was a splendid fellow, his horn measurements being :

From tip to tip round outer edge and				
across forehead	.	.	.	6 ft. 6 in.
Across the sweep	.	.	.	3 „ 2 „
Circumference at base	.	.	.	1 „ 9 „
Between tips	.	.	.	1 „ 9½ „

One of the strangest things imaginable happened to me on the 9th of January 1898. As it is quite cold at this time of the year even in the low country, accompanied by very heavy dews (which, with the long grass, add to the chilliness after the rains), it is quite common to find deer basking at sunrise, before they retire to cover for the day. This Sunday, the 9th, taking advantage of a moon, I made such an early start for the Naad, that I reached the low country, a good eight miles off, by sunrise, and I left the bridle-track to look for game. I had not proceeded far, when my Sholaga, Kanni-Madha, pulled up, pointing to one side, and I saw the antlers and head of a stag sambhur lying down, sunning himself. I was at the time using a D.B. ·450 Express of Francis F.'s. I took careful aim and fired. Not knowing exactly what had happened, owing to the smoke, I took a few paces forward, when I saw, as I thought, the sambhur in the same position, except that his ears were pricked back, as if trying to catch the direction of the sound; so again taking aim, I fired the left barrel. This time I distinctly saw the head fall forward, so hastened to the spot. Imagine my astonishment when I found two stags stone dead, each with a hole in the head, and lying so close that they were touching each other. They had been facing different ways, which, I suppose, accounts for the fact that when the first one was killed, the other one did not realize what had happened. Fortunately, it being bazaar day, I was able to get any number of

coolies, and had the two sambhur carried up entire to the estate, presenting one of them to the headman to distribute amongst the coolies as their perquisite.

On 9th January I shot a panther under rather peculiar circumstances. These animals are great pests to stock, and had been worrying round a great deal. I borrowed a goat, fortunately as it turned out, a white one. The moon was good, but the sky a bit cloudy, and as I had already sat up four nights in succession, during one of the intervals when the moon became obscured by cloud, I shut my eyes to give them a rest, as the strain and want of sleep were beginning to be felt in them. I had barely remained five minutes like this when suddenly I heard a choking cry from the goat. Looking in the direction, I saw in the dim light the goat being shaken by some unseen power. I fired straight for the white, and, except that it seemed to collapse, I heard no sound. I could still see a white patch, and fired again, but no sign or sound. I then clambered down from the tree—one does not seem to think till afterwards what might have happened if a wounded tiger or panther had been there—and walked up with rifle in hand and found a panther stone dead, with arms still clasped round the dead goat. The bullet had gone clean through them both. My second shot, too, had found its billet. I called up the Sholagas, whom I had told to wait within sound of my rifle, and had the panther carried up to my bungalow, which I reached by 10 o'clock, and how glad I was to get a good night's rest!

I had been out one afternoon while it was raining, and as we were stalking along we heard, about a mile behind us, the humph-humph of a tiger, so retraced our steps, with the hope we might see the game-killer, as we felt sure it must be the same one that had killed a chital, the devoured remains of which we had found a few days before. We found ourselves rapidly getting nearer, to judge by the greater volume of sound. At last the noise was so close to us, we knew it was a mere question of which would see the other first, the tiger or ourselves. All at once the Sholaga clutched me, pulling me to one side and pointing through some bamboo. There I saw the tiger, half crouched, but looking away from us in the direction of the river, which flowed close by. To make more certain of my aim I took a long bamboo stick from the Sholaga on which to rest my rifle. I took deliberate aim and fired. The tiger bounded off, and following his flight with my rifle, I let drive the left barrel at him. I could not believe my ears when my tracker said I had missed the first shot, but thought I had got in on the second. I went straight to the place where the tiger had been crouching, which was easily found by the flattened grass, and there found my bullet had thrown up the earth right under the animal. I was completely mystified, and felt so sure of my aim that I went back to where I had stood, leaving the Sholaga to mark the place of the couchant tiger, and took aim again. Then I saw what had happened, for right in front of my rifle, a few yards ahead, was a twig of bamboo freshly cut by the bullet.

The elevation of my rifle to the place where the branch was cut was in direct line with the middle of the tiger, and at least a foot to 18 inches above where my bullet had actually hit the ground. We then followed up to where the tiger had disappeared into the bamboo, and found again the Sholaga had been correct, as undoubtedly, from the blood, my left barrel had got home somewhere, but after missing such an easy standing shot, I had very little hope of having hit a vital spot when the animal was in headlong flight. It was almost dark anyway, and more than ever so in the dense bamboo cover, so we marked the place, determined to follow up the next day.

In the morning we took up the tracks and came to where the wounded tiger had crossed the river, which was quite shallow. On the opposite bank it had lain down where we found the bamboo leaves stained with blood, but from there we could find no further trace, and eventually had to give the search up.

I sailed for home in May and had a great good time of it, though it took a long while to rub the strangeness off, as I had not been home for thirteen years.

My great ambition while in England was to get a couple of good rifles built to me, one being a much-cherished .577 D.B. Magnum, firing 7 drams of powder—as I had been fully convinced by Sir Samuel Baker's book, that of all weapons a .577 Express was the most reliable. I also had a D.B. .303 built to me, which, with my Ubique shot and ball, I reckoned would enable me to hold my own with any game.

After my return, the end of October, I did very little shooting, just sufficient to test my rifles. On Christmas Day I bagged a jungle sheep or barking deer, which latter very nearly did for "Bully," my bull terrier. I had wounded the sheep, and my dog, which I always had led at heel, broke away and took up the tracks and soon commenced to bay some distance ahead. When I reached the place the sight that met my eyes was horrible. There were "Bully" and the deer facing each other—the former dripping in his own blood and great flaps of skin dangling from his side and belly. Even as I reached them I saw the enraged sheep butt forward, bowling the dog over, and before he could recover, cutting down at him with the two long tushes that are situated on each side of the upper jaw. "Bully" stuck to his guns like a good one, and only lay down, utterly done from loss of blood, after I had grassed his antagonist. I thought I would never get the dog back to camp, as his bowels were exposed in two places, besides his being covered with wounds on the back, shoulders, and everywhere. On reaching the camp I had the worst wounds sewn up, and putting him into my mosquito curtain, hammockwise, had him carried up to the estate. In about a month's time he was as keen and well as ever, and not the least cowed by his bad treatment, as he tackled several jungle sheep and got wounded twice again; but I think it made him a trifle more cautious.

CHAPTER X

LUCK AT LAST WITH TIGER

By C. W. G. MORRIS

IN 1899 my favourite trackers, Kanni-Madha and his brother Kanni-Jeddial, had left the estate to start on a "Podu" or clearing of their own, so I had engaged by an advance of pay a Sholaga, Kwolla, with whom I had wonderful luck.

I started for camp on 2nd April for my month's leave, which I get once a year and always spend in the jungle. I had great hopes when I started, as I was going to hitherto unexplored places away to the east, but I soon discovered it was the wrong time of year, so on the 14th of April returned to my old haunts, very sorry that I had wasted all these precious days and had nothing to show for them. This was, however, the turning-point of my bad luck.

On 16th I shot a tigress with cubs. On examination she proved to be blind in one eye, and I picked out of the eyeball and skull some thirty No. 6 shot. The cubs escaped.

On the 17th of July I was very lucky in bagging a panther, which had at last got the nickname of the "Rogue," as he had been too cunning for us

all, but on the above-mentioned date I got news of a kill by him, so sent two Sholagas to mark the spot and to come back with the news. I then arranged for one man to post me above the kill, while the other walked up from below. I was put on a grand open level piece of ground some twenty-two yards only from the victim, which was in a ditch just above our bandy road, and as the custom of this panther was to eat all he could in the daytime, then leave the carcase and kill again, I hoped he would be enjoying his mid-day meal. I had barely been in position five minutes when I heard a cracking of the undergrowth coming towards me, and next moment out trotted Mr. Spots to within ten paces, and on seeing me he pulled up short; but I gave him no time to think what his next move would be, as I sent a bullet from my "Ubique" fair into his chest and bowled him over. He was one of the finest panthers I have ever shot or seen, measuring, as he lay, $7\frac{1}{2}$ feet, and with a neck circumference of 24 inches.

The 30th of July will ever remain in my mind as the day of one of the most exciting adventures I have ever had.

A part of the low country where game is fairly plentiful, though much shot over now, is within easy reach of us, and very often I run down on the Saturday evening, to return on Sunday after a morning's stalk.

As good rain had fallen I did not care to lose such a favourable opportunity, so packed my kit and reached one of my shooting huts late in the evening in pouring rain, and with the roof leaking like a sieve; but I made the best of matters

and got quite chirpy when a Sholaga of a neighbouring village came to say that in the afternoon, as he was coming home, he heard a strange noise, like wild cats quarrelling, and on going towards the sound he was nearly frightened out of his life by a tiger springing out on him, and that the noise, he was sure, was from tiger cubs, and he would take me to the place in the morning. That night I got very little sleep from thinking about it, and was up at 3.30 A.M., and before 5 A.M. had roused my tracker and the man who was to show the tigress. On our way I heard a noise in the grass, and the Sholagas said it was a bear, so I went close up to it, but owing to the long grass could only discern a small patch of black, so I judged a shot, and, as is the rule in such cases, missed, much to my disgust, as it was a fine big fellow. The Sholagas wanted me to have a stalk after chital first, but I insisted upon being taken to the haunts of the tigress.

Certainly on arriving at the place there were evident signs of the truth of the man's statement, but having been disturbed the evening before, of course she had departed with her young ones; however, her night tracks were quite discernible on the soft ground after the rain, so we followed up for about a mile—I, like a fool, with no weapon in my hand, having given my rifles to the Sholagas to carry. Suddenly I was startled by a loud roar, and out jumped a big tigress from some longish grass, but before I could collar my rifle she had disappeared behind some cover; but she would not leave the vicinity, as I could tell by her growls, so I tried to get a shot at her by

dodging in and out of the bamboo, and twice came to close quarters, when she saluted us with angry roars, but never showed herself, as the undergrowth and bamboo were very thick. At last I got tired of this sort of work and proposed to my men that we should visit the patch of grass where she first showed herself, and see if the cubs were really there; so back we went, and had not gone far into the grass when the Sholagas exclaimed, "Here are her cubs, sir." I just caught a glimpse of one or two woolly things in the grass when I heard a growl from behind me, followed by an ear-splitting roar, from the tigress, which sent the men running back. Instinctively I faced round, but when I saw her come charging down on to me with mouth open, emitting savage grunts, I thought it was all up, as I could not believe she would leave me alone now that I was standing by myself beside her cubs. As she came on I heard the Sholagas behind me yelling for all they were worth to scare her from me; but she never paused in her rush till she was within a few feet of me. I was so petrified I had no more idea of firing than the man in the moon, simply depending upon frightening her by holding my ground, when she swerved clean round, still at the same speed, and galloped back on the track she came. I beckoned to the men to come on with my other rifle, and followed her, with the hope that she might be visible, but there was not a sign; so we then got to the other side of the cubs by a roundabout way, on some higher ground, and finally I decided to get up a tree that was immediately overlooking the cubs;



“INSTINCTIVELY 4 FACED ROUND.”

but first I sent a man up, intending to hand him one of my guns and climb up after him. Hardly, however, had he got well up the tree when Stripes came charging at us again, and this time I made up my mind to give it her. She did just the same as before, coming close up and swinging round and running back, so I up with my .577 and took a snap-shot, and saw her heave to one side, and the fellow up the tree swore she rolled over. Anyway, we found blood and followed up, and having presently fixed her position, I got up a tree overlooking the place where she lay, which I could tell by occasional shaking of the undergrowth, and gave her a right and left. She moved on after each shot, so I went to another place and finished her with a right and left of my "Ubique."

We then went back to the nursery and caught her three cubs alive. I should say they were about three weeks old, eyes open, but no teeth; their claws, though, were very sharp, as my hands could testify when feeding them.

This tigress had a much finer and longer set of teeth than the one shot in April.

On Saturday, 26th August, I could not resist the temptation to try my luck again, so packed, and was off to the same hut as before, but this time it had been re-thatched, so no fear of leakages to damp my ardour.

En route down the ghât I saw a fine old bull bison lying in the grass enjoying a siesta; if only he had stayed there I would almost certainly have bagged him, but, as it was, before I could get within shot, he had got up and was moving off,

stern towards me. The grass at this time of year is too long to follow bison, so I had to let him go.

Sunday morning I was up and on my way to the stalking ground before daylight.

As objects became visible, I was much better pleased with the appearance of the country than last time, as, by the greenness of the grass and refreshed look about the trees, I could see that there had been good rain lately, and I felt quite hopeful of seeing game about. It was so early that the pea-fowl had not yet ventured to leave their nightly perch, and hearing one not far off, I slipped a shot cartridge into my right barrel and made towards him, but he was much too vigilant, and flew off before I could get within shot—a good thing, too, as it turned out, for there was much nobler game not far off, which would have been disturbed if I had fired. I left the shot cartridge in the barrel, but took the precaution to lower the hammer so as not to be taken unawares, as I think most sportsmen will find that they instinctively fire the right barrel first. And my solitary tracker (I never care to take more than one man, as the fewer the people the less noise) had not proceeded far when we heard a great screeching of monkeys, and I said there must be one of the feline tribe on the prowl. We did not hurry ourselves, but just sauntered in and out of the thickets, always edging towards the uproar, which came from the banks of a stream that is running at this time of the year. We had got almost alongside the bamboo fringing the bank when what should I see but a huge tiger marching through the bamboo towards us, just

like the monarch of the jungle that he was, and offering a lovely broadside shot. Before even my gun-bearer saw him I had my Ubique on him, and took a beautiful sight on his left shoulder and pulled the trigger, but no response from my weapon. For one brief second I lowered my rifle, and then remembered it was the left barrel I must fire. This time my aim was much quicker and, I knew, not so good; the tiger had come to a standstill, evidently observing my tracker, who had moved a pace or two ahead of me before he caught sight of Stripes.

I fired, and heard the thud of the bullet striking him somewhere. The tiger sprang round, and somehow went between two upright bamboos not wide enough apart to let a man squeeze through sideways. With a grin of satisfaction the shikari pointed out some blood-stained fat smeared on the right-hand bamboos, thus showing that the bullet had gone through him, which was natural, as I had fired a solid conical; and we found him stretched dead a little further off.

A cub belonging to the blind tigress I shot in April was afterwards brought to me by a native. It seems the cub broke into the goat kraal one night, killed a goat, but was hazy as to where to get out. The herdsman, hearing a commotion, came out of his hut and found the intruder, which he shot.

The cub had still its milk teeth, so could not have been more than a year or eighteen months old, and no doubt fell an easy victim owing to the loss of its mother.

Two of the three tiger cubs I captured, died; the third throve, and is in the Lal Bagh Gardens

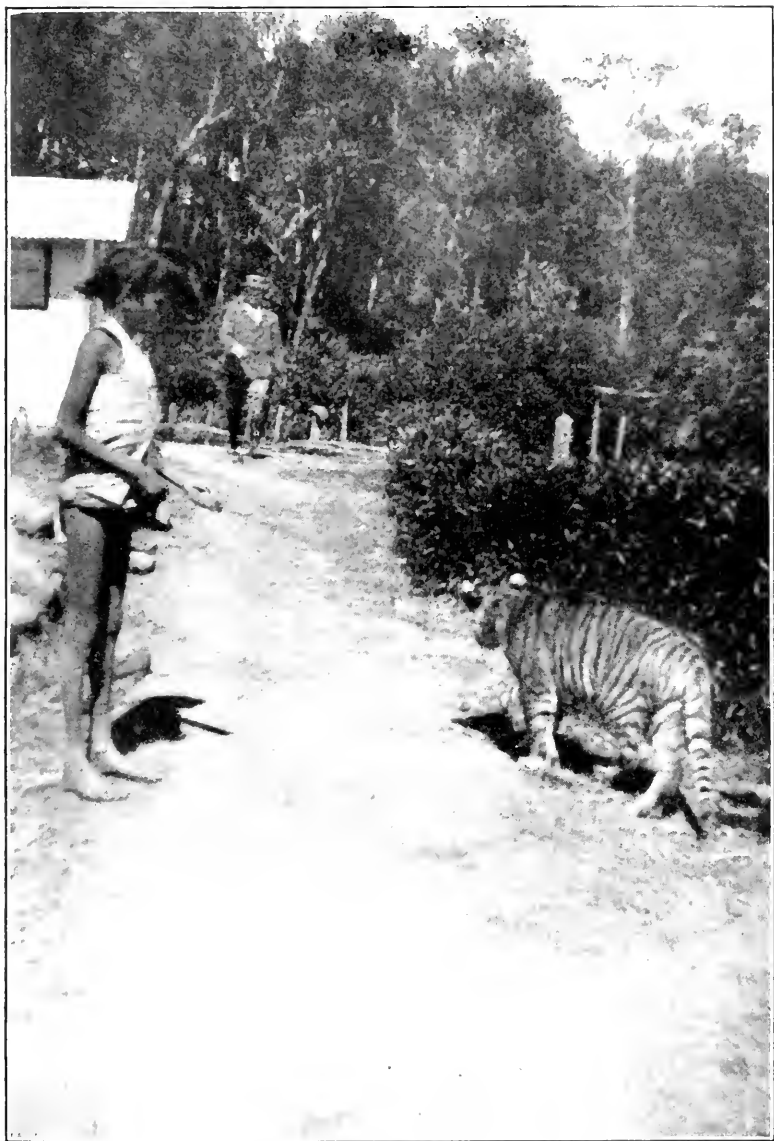
at Bangalore, and is known as "Jimmy," short for Jemimah—I suppose as a mark of sex.

I kept her for at least six months, and we were great friends. When she grew older I let her come out on a chain, and she used to follow me with my dogs.

Tiger cubs are very expensive animals to feed. I used to buy a batch of half a dozen cattle at a time, and kill one as required, about once a week. I always half boiled the meat to prevent her learning the taste of blood. Even then one had to keep away from her when she was feeding. One day I walked into the spare room of my bungalow where I kept her, just after a haunch of beef had been handed to her ladyship, as I wished to see how she would behave. She snarled at me, and when I put my foot near the meat she struck out at it with all her claws extended, driving them right into my boot.

On the 29th of March, 1900, I shot a bear under rather peculiar circumstances.

It seems, as the herdsman was grazing the cattle some distance from my bungalow, he found the fresh tracks of a bear leading into a cave, and at once sent up for me. Taking a spare Sholaga with me, I proceeded to the place, and found undoubted signs of a bear having gone into the cave. The mouth of the cave was so low that a man could only enter by going in bear-fashion, on all-fours. I stooped down and peered in, and could distinctly hear the breathing of an animal, so I ordered the men to bring me a long pole, intending to poke the brute up and get a shot if it made for the entrance. The



"JIMMY."

cave was on the slope of a hill, so by standing a little downhill I could get on a level with the cave entrance. Fortunately Bruin had evidently gorged himself on honey, and felt very disinclined to budge out of his cool quarters into the glare of a hot March day, but he objected to being nudged in the ribs by my stick, and shifted sufficiently from his place to give me the opportunity of a shot, which I took most promptly. It was followed by truly bearish roars, and I can assure you a wounded bear can make a most horrible row. Still he would not face the open, and to crawl in and face a wounded bear, with no elbow-room to spare, was a bit too warm for my liking. I decided, therefore, to see if smoking him out of his lair would not have the desired effect. Even that did not succeed, so I then had a torch tied to the end of a pole and pushed in towards the sluggard. The result was instantaneous. Out he came, and bang went my gun, and he rolled over stone dead, right into the fire, but we soon rolled him out of that to save his coat.

The bagging of that bear must have taken me the best part of six hours, with excitement the whole time, so that I was jolly tired when it was over. A bear is a nasty thing to tackle, and particularly so when one is single-handed.

This was a year of odd happenings, just showing how one never knows what one may meet when after the most ordinary game.

About a couple of miles below my bungalow there was an old abandoned coffee nursery. The undergrowth at the time had not got very thick,

and the path to and through it was still quite good. Jungle sheep are very fond of places of this sort, so on the evening of the 9th of April I took a Sholaga with me and my .303 and Ubique—the latter with only three rounds of ball on principle, as I was only going with the idea of possibly seeing a jungle sheep. I told the syce to bring my pony to a given spot on the bridle-track, which was very steep, the last part needing zigzags to reach the top. Off the Sholaga and I sallied down this bridle-track until we reached the path leading away to the nursery. As we reached the clearing, we went very slowly and cautiously, hoping to see the red form of a jungle sheep feeding. On and on we went, our hopes rapidly diminishing as we neared the end of the open. We had just left the nursery with our faces turned homewards, intending to strike the main road a little below where my pony was to be and not half a mile off, when the Sholaga and I both noticed perfectly fresh tracks of a solitary bison, so fresh in fact that the Sholaga whispered that he must be just ahead of us. The sun had set, and in another quarter of an hour it would be too dark to shoot, so my anxiety to make full use of the daylight left can be imagined. We followed the tracks easily and quickly, as the mango showers had fallen and the earth was soft. After following a bit, we paused to look ahead; immediately on my right I noticed a shelf of rock below which the ground sloped to a hollow. Instinct or something drew me to this shelf, and I walked up to it very cautiously so that only my head would show as the view below enlarged and

I neared the spot. What luck that I should have gone in that direction ! as before I reached the rock I saw a huge bull looking up at me in surprise ; next moment I surprised him still more by getting him fair behind the shoulder, and put a left into him before he got out of sight. Then followed ten minutes of the most exciting time imaginable, as I followed hot on the bull's heels, so closely it is a wonder he left me alone ; once he certainly did meditate a charge, as, with much noise and breaking of the undergrowth, he faced round in my direction, but the Sholaga dragged me behind a tree out of sight. It was getting so dark that it was almost impossible to discern what was animate and what not ; in fact, once when I was uncertain as to whether the object I saw was a rock or the bison, I deliberately broke some sticks underfoot, knowing that if it was the bison, he would move. The noise had the desired effect and I fired. I think I fired three more shots after the first left and right. For the last shot it was so dark that I could not see the foresight of my rifle and distinctly saw the flash of the explosion. By this time we were quite near to the road and we judged the bull had crossed, so as it was too dark and dangerous to follow on, especially as the direction led into thicker cover, I decided to let well alone and take up the tracks next morning. I found my syce petting and stroking my Arab, as he was very excited over the noise of firing. The groom was a grizzle-bearded old Mahommedan of long standing in my service, and thought nothing of having to wait till dark for his master's arrival.

Good old Hussain, I wonder whether he is still alive ! no better syce has ever served me.

Next morning we made an early start and kept to the bridle-track till we clearly saw the hoof-marks of the bison crossing it. Within a couple of hundred yards of the road we found the bull stone dead ; he had evidently lain down soon after we gave up the chase and never rose again.

On the 10th of May I got a fairly big male panther and very nearly had an accident to my Sholaga. I had wounded the panther the evening before, and feeling sure he was dead, picked up on my way quite a boy Sholaga by the name of Chick (*i.e.* little) Massana. We easily found the tracks, and after following a bit, noticed the animal had vomited up the previous meal. While I was looking curiously at this, Massana wandered ahead, and I was suddenly roused from my cogitations as to where the bullet had got the panther, by hearing a shriek from the boy. I looked ahead and saw the panther crouching in a ditch in the act of springing on the Sholaga ; my aim was instantaneous and fortunately true, catching him fair in the shoulder, thereby crumpling him on the spot, and to make quite sure of no further attempt at attack I followed up quickly with a left before he could recover. I scolded the boy severely for going ahead, pointing out to him what might have happened if I had missed.

The ground being fairly open and only grass, the boy had fortunately seen the animal in time, as no doubt the brute was lying low with the hope of being stumbled over, in which case one of us would have been mauled.

CHAPTER XI

MY RECORD BISON AND A COUPLE OF TIGERS

By C. W. G. MORRIS

I SPENT a long time in South Africa on the Zambesi, in the very thick of game, but as I wish to write here entirely on Indian sport, I will not touch on my adventures in Africa.

I had been very seedy, getting continued attacks of malaria, which culminated in "black-water," so I was forced to take sick-leave.

In December of 1905 my leave had still to run till May following, so, as the home winter was a bit too damp and cold for a constitution somewhat disordered by malaria and a long residence in such a hot climate as the Zambesi, I took advantage of an invitation from a very old Indian friend to spend the Indian winter with him.

I landed at Bombay, and arrived at Tellicherry on the 11th.

I had a rare good time at Tellicherry, and felt as jolly as a sand-boy at finding myself back in India. Mr. and Mrs. L. both combined to make me feel thoroughly at home, and the two weeks I spent on the coast were filled up with a continued round of dinners, etc. We had to return to Tellicherry from a sea-fishing trip we took, as

Mr. L. had to represent the Madras Forest Department at the Mysore kheddah operations, which were taking place shortly in honour of the Prince and Princess of Wales's visit to Mysore. I was to go as Mr. L.'s guest.

On the 3rd of February we made our way back to Madras territory.

My first destination was M——, to which I had to transport myself and kit in a couple of carts, arriving there on the morning of the 20th of February.

A planter, with proverbial hospitality, had supplied me with a couple of shikaris. After a light repast, I strolled out to explore the place, but returned feeling rather disheartened, as only a few old tracks were to be seen. Fortunately a forest guard came to my rescue and sent for two local men, who had been in at the death of several bison. At 3 P.M. I again set out in an opposite direction, and on reaching the top of a hill, one of the shikaris turned to me saying, "This is the only place where bison are to be found at this season." We followed a path through some dense jungle, crossed some grass land, and had just entered another shola (wooded jungle) when we heard some heavy beasts crash off. The men hurried me forward to the open country on the other side, with the evident hope of seeing the bison emerge, but the herd must have turned and kept to the forest, so we struck a path higher up and made our way carefully back, hoping to hear or cut them off. We finally reached the outskirts above the spot where we first entered, without seeing or hearing them. While surveying

the open country, one of the men excitedly attracted my attention to a dark object grazing in the open, on the side of a hill about a mile off, which, owing to the size, led me to believe it must be an elephant, but the shikari declared it was a solitary bull bison, and my glasses soon satisfied me that such was the case.

By this time it was close upon sundown, and my one anxiety was to get within shot while yet light enough to see the sights of my rifle. After an animated conversation as to the best point to reach, we decided to work round and get above him, the wind also being favourable for that move, so taking one man I hurried forward. After reaching a hollow swampy place, which we had to cross, we lost sight of the quarry, and could only trust to finding him somewhere about the spot where he had been first seen grazing. The clamber up the face of the hill was heart-breaking, it being covered with loose stones concealed in matted grass, so that with the effort of climbing, and anxiety not to make a noise, added to the knowledge that it was getting darker every moment, I was dripping by the time I reached a coign of vantage. We proceeded carefully along the side, looking down every moment hoping to see the bull, and had not gone far when the native crouched, pointing below him. All I saw was the immense head and horns of the animal as he gazed up at me through some very long grass, and I could only guess how he stood, so fired to just miss his head, hoping to get the bullet into his chest inside the shoulder blade. It was barely light enough to see the foresight of my rifle.

That the shot took effect somewhere was evident from the loud smack of the bullet as it came in contact. The bison swerved round, and I fired the left into the waving grass, which completely hid the brute from view. That he entered a narrow neck of jungle was plain from the breaking of undergrowth, so snatching a long-range .370 I awaited his appearance in the open on the other side, trusting to getting in a right and left.

As he did not show up and I saw the two men I had left behind coming towards me, from a point where they commanded a view of any other egress, I awaited their approach, when they too said he had not left the jungle. By this time it was so dark that to find our way home was bad enough : as to thinking of following up a wounded bison, that was out of the question.

Next morning I made an early start before sunrise, as the distance was considerable. There was no difficulty in finding the spot where the bison had been, from the trampled grass, and the tracks were equally plain. He had lain down soon after entering cover, and during the night had been in two other places, the last one showing he had just moved off at daybreak, the form being still warm. It puzzled me that there was no sign of blood, and although I know Canarese fluently and Tamil fairly well, I could not make the men, who were jungle Kurjas, and who spoke Malialum, understand the two words I used for blood ; but at last, noticing I had scratched my hand, I pointed to the blood, signing there was none on the tracks. They caught on at once, saying “seru” (blood), and explained that the

shoulder was damaged, and the bull was bleeding internally, owing to the shot being from above. A still greater surprise awaited us, for, on emerging from the forest into the open, to our astonishment we saw from the cropped grass that the bull had been grazing, but only a nibble here and there.

We had followed the tracks only a few yards when my sharp-eyed shikari pulled up, pointing to some twitching grass, and whispered, "There he is," and there he undoubtedly was, waiting head on for our reception.

After a bit I clearly made out his horns shimmering in the sunlight above the grass, while a continued switching of his tail had first shown us his close proximity. He moved a step or two towards us, so, making out his body, I fired, and on his jumping to one side I gave him the left, loading up as quickly as possible, and none too soon, as he charged right at us, pulling up immediately above me. The front man shinned up a tree; I do not know what the other did, as I was sufficiently concerned at my own position, with an angry bull glaring down at me within a few yards!

I loosed off both barrels at something, but just at what part of his anatomy I was by no means sure, though it relieved me immensely to see he did not like such rude play, as he staggered back, and eventually reeled out of sight. I here made a fatal mistake, against the wishes of the shikari, who gesticulated to his companion to hurry me up the face of the hill to cut the bison off. I was so cocksure

he was done for, that I made for where he had last been seen. Imagine my disgust when, after some precious moments had been wasted, one of the natives pointed to him a jolly good hundred yards off, walking slowly up the hill, and just about to enter a dense shola. I exchanged my 12-bore Explora for the .370 and let rip, when, with a mighty bound, he plunged forward, and as he entered the forest I gave him the left. There was no doubt of blood being a guide now ! Foreseeing, though, that there might be delay, I sent back for my lunch, and sat down to eat my breakfast meanwhile.

We followed the bison the whole day, during which time he stuck to dense, almost impenetrable, jungle. This made tracking very tedious and tiring.

He broke from us twice, but attempted no further mischief, although within a few yards of us each time ; the crashing of the undergrowth alone made us aware of his having broken away.

At sunset there was nothing for it but to return home, fearing there was another heavy day's work to be done before I could count him mine.

On the third day I was attended by several Moplas, armed with butcher knives, keen for the meat. These Mahommedans had to slash the expiring animal thoroughly, in strict observance of their customary religious rites, as otherwise it would be unclean food. They were made to keep well in the background, while I and my trusty Kurjas followed the tracks.

He kept on for miles before lying down, and then we came on five forms, where he had lain down only to move on a few yards again. Finally he left the jungle and crossed some grass land, entering an isolated piece of forest, where my men were certain he must be, so I suggested that one should accompany me to the other side and stand in the open (as to get a shot inside seemed hopeless from the previous day's experience), while the other men followed on to put him up. Before I reached the appointed spot I noticed fresh tracks of a bison having come out, and the man with me said, "It is no good, he has not lain up in this bit"; eventually the followers joined us, confirming the news. Intervening was a huge stretch of open country before the quarry could hope to reach cover. It was then noon, and the natives, being disheartened themselves, had an idea that I was cornered, but, as I pointed out to them, it was the third day the animal had not eaten, and where he lay next would be his final resting-place, and I intended to follow him to that spot. It was wonderful to see the tracking done by one special man. The blood had ceased the evening before, and yet, without a pause, he took me on, till at last we reached a long, unbroken line of dense forest. Before entering, there was a hasty consultation amongst the men, and the leader came forward to say he wanted me to come with him, so as to enter the jungle further up, to stand in the bison's path if he should be roused by the others coming behind.

I had not waited five minutes beside a tree, well inside, but commanding a good view in the

gloom of this virgin jungle, when I heard shouts and shrieks ahead of me, followed directly by the loud tread of a large animal.

One or two Moplas having been posted in trees on the outskirts, so as to turn him towards me, commenced shouting too. Next moment my bull pulled up within seventeen yards of me, and stood looking towards where the Moplas were, little realizing his aggressor was so near.

On firing the right with my 12-bore, he did not flinch or budge, although the bullet entered in front of the left shoulder; but on getting the second barrel, he commenced to reel, and came down with a crash, and the Moplas were on him like fiends.

He was the toughest bison I have ever had to do with, as, besides the number of shots he had had from me, I found three other bullets embedded in different parts of his body; one was no doubt from a native gun, but the other two were nickel from a .450 Express.

The moment I saw the head I knew it had beaten all my previous bags. It was enormous! the horns measuring:

From tip to tip, round outer edge and			
across forehead	.	.	6 ft. 9½ in.
Across the sweep	.	.	3 „ 6 „
Between the tips	.	.	2 „ 5½ „
Circumference at base of horn	.	.	1 „ 10 „

The skull and horns are now in Capetown. Strange to say, my first bullet had gone through the lobe of his ear, entering side of neck and penetrating inside his shoulder blade.



MY RECORD BISON.

In January 1909, on returning from Rhodesia, I went to stay with my old friend M—— on the Nelliampathy Hills, for the express purpose of bagging a Nilgiri ibex, a species of goat that I had not previously shot. As a trophy it is not much to look at, and I should say the chief excitement lies in the rough ground one has to negotiate, perhaps specially precipitous where I was. I bagged two, one of which was dashed to pieces by a fall of 300 feet.

In response to another invitation from the ever-hospitable planter, I proceeded on the 5th of February to spend a couple of nights at Mr. and Mrs. H——'s bungalow, with the hope of securing an old saddle-back (ibex) on their side of the cliffs. Although I had done a good twelve-mile walk that morning to reach their bungalow, I nevertheless went for a stalk in the afternoon, on the chance of seeing a sambhur, or possibly a bison, but I returned in the dark without having seen anything. After dinner it was arranged that I should make a very early start next morning for the ibex ground. I was called soon after 4 A.M., and was ready to move by 5 o'clock, but the Mulcher guide turned up so late that the plans had to be altered, and I again took the slope that I had climbed the previous evening. About twenty minutes' steady climbing brought me to a summer lodge, where Mr. H—— spends the hot weather. We reached this bungalow soon after 7 A.M., and as we were wending our way through a narrow strip of jungle, we heard a sambhur "bell" some distance ahead, and I thought it might be that the rustling

of the leaves, which are very dry at this season, had alarmed the beast. We emerged into the open, consisting of a small strip of grass-land. On the other side of this lay a similar piece of jungle, through which our path led. Again the sambhur belled, and almost simultaneously with the "belling" we heard the deep mutterings of a tiger; it did not need the Mulcher's whisper to tell me what was on foot. I was at the time standing out in the open on a long slab of sheet-rock, over which the path wound, and the tiger could not have been a hundred yards off, inside the cover and in the direction where the path entered. I felt sure Stripes was making his way towards us. I had just cast my eyes down to see where to place my feet, so as to advance as noiselessly as possible, when a touch on my arm made me look up, and, seeing my man pointing ahead, I followed with my eyes in that direction, and was amazed to see a tiger walking straight towards me. His whole form was exposed, but coming end on, his great round head seemed to take up the whole view. It was the work of a second to have my rifle up, but I knew how risky the head shot was. In the few moments, as I puzzled where to place my shot, I wondered why the tiger had not discovered my presence, and I believed afterwards that it was the sun, which, having just risen, was catching him full in the eyes, obscuring his vision; whereas I was standing in the shade of a small bushy hillock, through which the sun had not penetrated. Certainly it was a sight to be remembered for many a long day. The peculiar facial markings



THE NELLAMPATHY TIGER.

gave the impression that the tiger was smiling, and his enormous size and vivid colouring as he literally lumbered towards me seemed garish and out of place in the short grass. A slight turn in the path gave me the opportunity I had waited for, and, drawing a line between the car and point of the shoulder, I fired, when, without a sound, he lurched back and rolled over on his side, stone dead, with never a movement. Killed at exactly thirty paces from where I stood, I found, on examination, that my split bullet had crashed into his chest, passing clean through the heart, and was embedded in the bowels in the shape of a perfect mushroom. I had left the bungalow at 6.15, and by 7.30 A.M. the tiger was mine—a fine male, measuring 9' 6", with a splendid ruff and tremendous forepaws.

After my return to the estate, on the 20th of March 1909, it was reported to me that a tiger had killed three head of cattle in one place, besides badly lacerating a buffalo which had come back to the kraal. It turned out that really five head of cattle had been killed, but at the time the informants only knew of three, so I went down, and found a cow, calf, and bullock. The latter had been dragged a little way to the bank of a stream, but all three were otherwise untouched. I had the cow and calf dragged to where the bullock was, and fixing upon a suitable tree had a machân built and commenced sitting up at 3.30 P.M., having dismissed everybody with the injunction that two were to be within call, as there was no moon and I had no electric lamp, so it would be useless sitting up after dark. At

6 o'clock, a good half-hour before sunset, I heard rending and munching in a totally opposite direction, but could see nothing as I was in thick jungle. I called for my men, hoping they might turn up in time to investigate, as without a sling I did not care to risk breaking my heavy D.B. ·375 by letting it drop while scrambling down the tree. My men only hurried up at dusk and that after signalling for a third time, so there was nothing to be done but return to the bungalow with the determination to be at the tiger's haunts by daylight.

The next morning I left the bungalow soon after five by lantern light, and we were within half a mile of the place by the first streak of dawn. We first visited the three kills, which were untouched. With me were a Sholaga tracker and the cattleman. Pointing in the direction whence I had heard the sound of eating the previous evening, I told the Sholaga to lead the way, warning him to go carefully and keep his eyes open, as I knew the best chance of bagging the tiger lay in our finding him on the kill, for if once disturbed after such a heavy meal, the probability of his returning before dark would be very remote. The Sholaga certainly guided me by the best route, but unfortunately his eyes were not skinned sufficiently, for, as I followed on his footsteps and looked across a slight hollow to the bank of a small stream, I saw the head of a big tiger lying down facing away from us. I tried to stop the Sholaga by a slightly audible hiss, but without result, so in desperation I slewed my rifle round on the spot. Just as I did so the

tiger looked round and jumped to his feet, and simultaneously I fired, a mere snap-shot, but he seemed to lurch and went off growling. I was terribly upset, as, if the Sholaga had seen him in the first instance, I ought to have bagged him on the spot. The Sholaga only saw the tiger as he rose to his feet, and at the same time the crack of my rifle sounded behind him, and he at once exclaimed, "You have hit him."

We crossed over to where Stripes had jumped up, and found only the head and neck of a cow, so that practically the whole of a cow had been gorged in the night, and there was the warm lair of the tiger right beside the kill. We followed in the direction in which the tiger had charged off, and within a few yards found large splashes of blood on a green *strobilanthus* leaf that had evidently been broken off in the first rush; further on we found stuck to the stalks of the undergrowth what Kerta termed "whottay banju," which being interpreted means blood from the stomach, so it was evident he had been badly wounded.

As the sun had not yet lightened the gloom, although it was 6.45, I decided to follow my invariable plan of waiting to give the tiger time to sicken of his wound. The tracks led to the right, and fortunately a newly made forest road spanned the whole area in a comparatively small circle, so that we could either locate him within this or see by his footmarks that he had crossed into more distant regions. We had stopped within a few yards of the road, and keeping to the left in fairly open ground we soon reached it. There I sat down to indulge in "chota hazri" and a

smoke, listening the while, with the pleasure that enters the breast of all sportsmen, to the flattering remarks of Kurrama and Kerta as to the size of the tiger and the accuracy of their master's rifle.

After an hour's patient wait, we braced ourselves for a further investigation by taking the road in its whole circle, and quite soon came on the pug tracks of a large tiger. There were no signs of blood, and as the marks were those of a leisurely walk, my men argued that they were the night tracks; but I had my doubts, and after-results proved I was correct. Anyway we continued our walk and found further evidence of his roamings. At a place where he had lain on the road looking down towards the kill, the mark of his tail was plainly visible. That these were night tracks was beyond dispute. We eventually reached the path that I had come down by in the early morning, which was on the other side of the circle. Here I found a Sholaga boy, Bola, with my breakfast, and Kerta's brother, Madha, who, hearing the shot, had come to learn the news, so they joined forces after depositing the tiffin basket in a shady nook. The real work of the day now began, and the tiger had had a good couple of hours to stiffen. The tracks soon showed that he had crossed the road, and led into long, dry lemon grass, the blades of which were smeared with blood; ahead was a piece of jungle to which he had evidently made. The tracking was not easy owing to his slow pace, and the blood was scanty, caused, so the Sholagas said, by his having eaten to repletion so that the wound had become stopped up.

I had constituted Madha the chief tracker, he being the eldest of the three Sholagas, and he confessed after reaching the jungle that he had got off the right track, as the pug mark impressed on the leaves was evidently that of a night prowler. Just before entering the jungle three of the men who were scattered below Madha and me signed that they heard sounds of an animal moving off in the leaves, but we could see nothing. I knew this little bit of jungle well, as in past years I had bagged several panther therein; it only extended a short way up, succeeded by open grass land to the ridge of the hill. We proceeded along the right-hand side of the cover to the top, where I sat down to drink from a cool rivulet. We then descended the left side, intending to return to where we had last seen blood, but there was no need to go so far, as we almost immediately came on the big impress where the tiger had lain up, and a quantity of blood, and what was more to the point, he had vomited up a considerable quantity of beef from the night's meal, showing how sick he was. Blood was flowing more freely, and we followed it from the jungle into the lemon grass again. Within a few yards he had lain down again, until aroused by our coming on his trail, so realizing the risks we ran, I ordered Madha to climb a tree every few yards, from whence he could see if the way was clear for moving on.

The value of this manoeuvre quickly showed itself, as before half a dozen trees had been climbed, Madha signalled from above that he heard the tiger. We were at that moment close

to a patch of very green dense undergrowth, out of which the tiger had apparently moved; so at his suggestion he and I skirted the lower side where the hill sloped, in the hope of seeing our booty, while the other three men followed on the tracks. When the Sholagas joined us on the other side they reported that the tiger had again lain down and vomited up a great deal more meat, and a much greater quantity of blood had flowed. Our progress had been so slow that it was getting on for 11 o'clock, so I called a halt for breakfast. Two men went back and brought me the grub, which I enjoyed as much as excitement would allow; perhaps if I had known that the tiger had turned here and was lying in the long grass about fifty yards above me, it might not have added to my comfort. So we chatted gaily, as the Sholagas were confident he had made off down below to the hullah (river), where we thought we might find him reposing in the shade and obtain a comparatively good view for a *coup de grâce*.

I was by now quite confident the tiger was wounded unto death but would need a finishing shot. I smoked a pipe till 12 o'clock, then once more took up the quest. We soon found the tiger had decided to keep to the long grass, no doubt because it offered more concealment.

That the tiger only lay up until we were on the move again was proved by Madha signalling from a tree that he heard rustling in the grass, and we found a fresh form with wet blood. Just above us on the slope of the hill were two gigantic rocks a little apart from each other, forming a cleft, and on the nearer one clung a species of fig-tree

which lent itself to the adventure later on. For some unaccountable reason Kurrama, the herdsman, was positive the tiger lurked between these two rocks, and we were not more than twenty yards off in an ugly position below them. Madha climbed a sapling, and I watched his countenance, which I had learned was most expressive. He very shortly began imitating loud breathing and pointed to the rocky knoll, then getting frightfully excited, gesticulated towards the grass. I looked, and, lo and behold, from out those rocks stepped Stripes. What with the grass and the fact that his head and shoulders had already disappeared behind another stone, I could only get in a snapshot far back, but the shock of the .375 bullet was so great that I saw his hind-quarters and tail swirl over and disappear behind the rock, from whence came angry mutterings. I then saw some gymnastics worth looking at! Madha, who is an extremely lengthy individual, was swinging on a sapling much too low in his opinion to be safe; suddenly I saw a long leg stretched out, followed by an equally long arm towards a Matti tree. His limbs just touched the trunks, not sufficient to get a grip, so throwing back his whole weight the sapling rebounded, bringing him within grip, and next moment the plucky tracker was thirty feet above ground.

I looked round and found only Kurrama, the herdsman, on foot, holding my spare rifle (a 12-bore shot and ball) rigidly in front of him and pointing straight for the small of my back. I glanced at it to see if the safety catch was all right, as I did not want a bullet through my vitals.

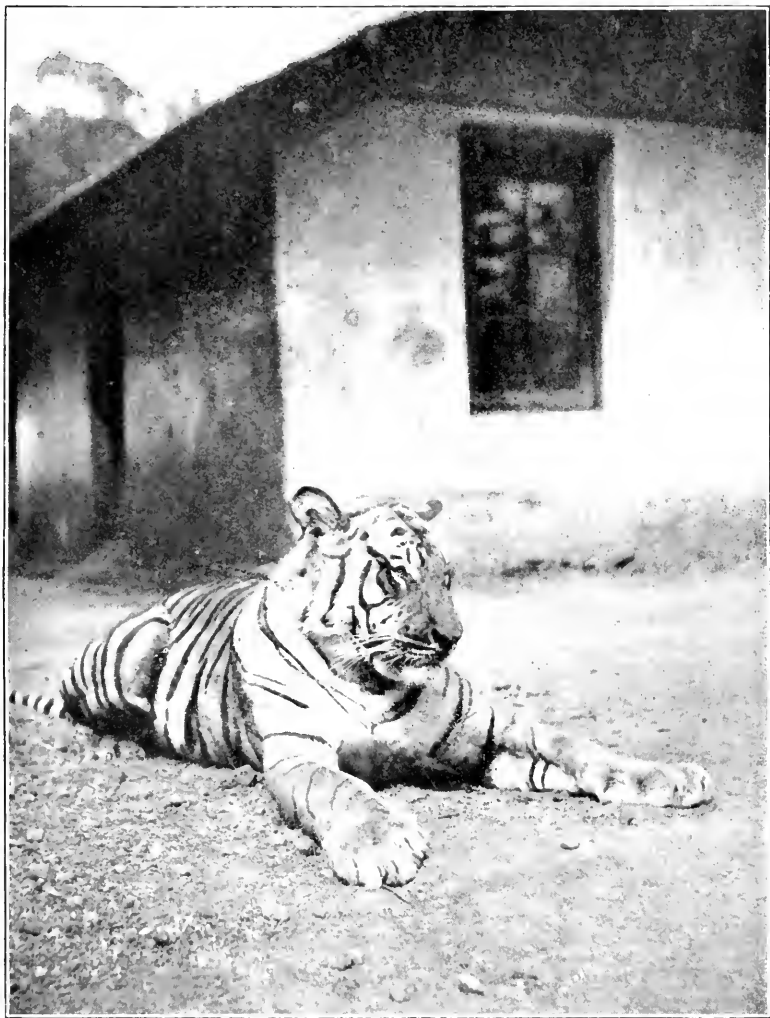
I had barely done so when Madha called out, "Take to the trees, every one of you," and next moment Kurrama, rifle and all, was up a tree too, and I found myself alone with the tiger. I looked hastily towards where I knew he was by his growls, and, seeing no sign, I as calmly as possible suggested that if one of them would reach down and take my rifle, I too might follow the monkey's example by taking to a tree. Kerta did so, and with one jump from the top of a convenient rock I flung myself on to a bough, pulling myself up to a safe distance, and discovering Kurrama in the same tree. I found my refuge very pliant but most comfortable, with a nice branch to sit on and another just the right distance to support my feet. The tiger's mutterings were not pleasant, and from Madha's grimaces he was evidently showing his teeth, looking all around for us. Madha suggested that as I could not see the quarry from my coign of vantage, I should get down and take up a position on the very rocks the tiger had just left, which would bring me within striking distance of him; but his purrs seemed hardly friendly; so to show the intrepid Madha, who soared above us all, that haste was not my motto under such circumstances, I pulled out my pipe and relit it, and with rifle across my knees enjoyed a quiet smoke, the while watching Madha, who was gibbering with what we will call sheer excitement. He evidently thought he was talking to us, but only his lips were moving until Kurrama from behind me rudely remarked, "If you will speak out we may hear what you say."

At last Madha found his tongue and said the tiger was moving off, so learning that I could get a shot from the first-mentioned rocks, and Kerta volunteering to cross the space with my rifle, I took the spare one from Kurrama and essayed to get down the tree. By no amount of agility could I get back on to the rock I had sprung from, so I had to ignominiously scramble to the foot of the tree and then I scurried through the long grass to behind the first rock, up which I could scramble by the aid of the fig-tree. Here Kerta was already awaiting me. I handed him my gun, but the thought of the tiger perhaps coming to chew chunks out from behind is not an aid to unpractised climbing. With the help of rubber-knobbed boots, however, and Kerta hauling me from above, I got to the top of number one rock, but could only hear, without locating, Stripes, and was then told I would have to cross a gap to an even more imposing rock. When I did so my ears were saluted with most horrible roarings, but the sunlight, the colour of the grass and the tiger were so well blended, that I could not make him out at first. The spot where the growl came from was, however, so evident that gradually my eyes disentangled the one from the other and I distinguished the tiger, crouched facing me, snarling with bared fangs; but although my position was within an easy rushing spring I knew I was safe from the way he kept turning his head towards his hindquarters, showing that the effects of my first, or second, or both shots combined, had crippled his propelling powers badly. Watching for an opportunity to avoid his head,

I fired for the point of his right shoulder, and as that did not finish his career I gave him the left barrel on the other shoulder and he rolled over on his side.

My morning's shot had got him high up on the hip just missing the bone, and had come out on the left side of his paunch, from whence dangled a bunch of fatty tissue which had painted his course through the grass. The delay in following him up probably saved us a mauling, as on skinning him I found the whole surface of his hind-quarters badly inflamed, and when I saw him in the grass, which gave me my second chance, he seemed as if he were walking on stilts, instead of moving with the crouching gait one would have expected under the circumstances.

This animal was very thick-set and bursting with fat, and stubby. I had not a tape with me, but I took a rough measurement, which panned out at about 9 feet. He was a male with undamaged fangs, and a very decent ruff, beautifully marked.



"THICK-SET AND BEAUTIFULLY MARKED."

CHAPTER XII

MARRIED AND A RUN OF LUCK

By C. W. G. MORRIS

I WILL conclude by relating as briefly as possible a few of the experiences I had between November 1910, when the crowning luck of all came in the shape of a wife, and September 1922.

Apart from joining Captain F. to follow a tiger he had wounded (when luckily I got in a shot which turned the brute, enabling him to wipe it out) it was not till April 1912 that I got a chance of my own.

My wife and I were camped in the Naad or low country. The evening of our arrival, while out with a tracker, I saw the fresh pug marks of a tiger on the side of a nullah which at this season was almost dry except for a pool here and there. I had an old cow tied up, and next morning sure enough it was killed.

As a wedding present I had been given an Ever-Ready electric light with some twenty yards of wire, and this was a lovely opportunity to try it, as there was no moon.

Tying the kill securely by the neck to a tree, I had (instead of the chair, which I prefer) a machân put in a convenient tree, as owing to the

distance from camp I decided I would stay the whole night if Stripes did not turn up in daylight.

I climbed into the tree at 3 P.M.; darkness came but not the tiger. I tried my light to see if it was working all right; it was splendid, I could see the kill plumb in the centre of the halo of light. About 10 o'clock, hearing tearing and gnawing, I switched on the lamp and made out the head of a tiger, and fired. This was followed by a "whoof" and snuffle as the animal charged away. Barely a few minutes had elapsed after I doused the glim when there was a loud roar from the direction in which the wounded beast had gone. I was puzzled as to what it meant, but feeling sure my bullet had got home all right, I rolled myself up in a blanket for a snooze, with one ear anyway on the alert.

It was about midnight when, to my astonishment, I was thoroughly aroused by the sound of fearful rending. Quickly training my rifle on to the kill I again turned on the light and saw a huge tigress apparently trying to tear the head off the kill. On seeing the glare she sat up on her haunches and gazed up at the seeming full moon which had so suddenly appeared. This offered a priceless shot, which I took immediate advantage of, and I heard the thud of the bullet as I scored a bull. She plunged forward and came crashing towards my tree, close to which she expired.

Next morning we found the result of my first shot in the shape of bone, sinew, and hair scattered on the ground, and on following the blood tracks we came on a wounded three-quarter grown cub, which had a smashed paw and shoulder; this I despatched at close quarters with my 12-bore.



14 Nov 1900

LIVING PRONE ON A ROCK.

In September of the same year I was out one Sunday after sambhur, having with me three Sholaga trackers. I had gone on ahead with one, to await the other two, whom I had told to walk quietly through a piece of jungle towards me. While waiting I was attracted by a peculiar moaning in the distance, and on putting up my field-glasses my vision was greeted with the strange sight of some bison circling about with lowered horns. Suspecting the reason I studied the place carefully, and soon espied a very large tiger lying prone on a rock, switching his tail. I suppose he funked tackling them, as after a bit he jumped off the rock and commenced walking down through some long grass, with tail very erect like an angry dog; in fact I could distinctly see the bushy end of his tail bobbing along when the animal itself was merged in the grass. I immediately sent the tracker back to fetch the other two Sholagas, and as they arrived the tiger entered an isolated patch of jungle, while the bison disappeared over a ridge.

There was a wide expanse of open grass land around the patch of forest the tiger had entered, the main jungle being below me. I felt sure if disturbed the tiger would naturally seek the cover of the latter. In the open on the grass hill-side, between where the tiger was lying and in the direction where I hoped he would bolt, was a large rock commanding a view all round.

Prior to taking up my position on this rock I ordered the trackers to beat up from below, through the piece of jungle where the tiger was now lying up. They carried out my instructions,

but I observed that they had taken to the trees like monkeys, clambering along the boughs. I did not see any movement, yet that tiger must have come to the very edge of some long grass quite close to my rock. Finding as he supposed a clear road, he came bounding past me at a gallop. I was using a D.B. .375 H.V.; my right bowled him over, and as he was recovering my left landed him in the hips. This gave me the biggest head that I have in my bungalow. A bulldog I had with me was not a bit abashed by the size or smell of the vanquished, and started to worry the carcase.

In April 1913 I got a fine thick-set tiger over a kill. I merely mention this, as it proved that in a head-shot the bullet is deflected more often than it penetrates.

I had wounded him late in the evening, so had to follow him up the next morning. As I was crossing an open glade, on the blood spoor with a couple of jungle men, we heard some squirrels, a tiny species found all through India on the plains, making a great noise from a thicket just ahead of us, and the trackers assured me the tiger was there; as I walked towards the cover I saw his huge head slowly rising, facing me. I had no other shot, so let him have it on the pate. Down it dropped and I rushed into close quarters, when I found the tiger to be quietly breathing, only stunned by the bullet, so I finished him off with another behind the left shoulder. My first bullet had ricocheted off, only chipping away a circular piece of the skull the size and thickness of a rupee, which lay loose inside the skin.

In April 1914 we went to live at Garstead, where we had been granted a bungalow site on Gunguru Kanawé, and the following May left for home on seven months' leave.

After my return, in May 1915, Mrs. S., a friend of ours, and a very keen sportswoman, came to stay with us. My wife and I had had a very pleasant camp with her and her husband in May 1913. She was anxious to bag a tiger. The first chance was lost; I had tied up a goat, and a tiger came and passed under our machân, jumping on the goat without any warning. The suddenness of the onslaught must have flurried Mrs. S., as she missed. Strange to say, the goat was none the worse except for a few scratches. Some days later another kill was reported and we again sat up: the tiger came quite early, and as he was approaching Mrs. S. got her shot in; instead of dashing off the tiger came blundering on, and I put in a couple more bullets, rolling him over quite close to the kill:—another instance of how impossible it is to know what a tiger will do. I have fired at a tiger, certainly on a pitch dark night, not once but two or three times in the same night, with the only result that it has shown its displeasure by raging round my tree. Over one kill I wounded a tiger twice, right and left, and yet it returned to the kill, leaving splashes of blood, and having evidently circled all round the carcase. Hardly anticipating this I had not sat up again, and only discovered its return when going next morning to follow up the tracks.

I recollect my brother wounding a tiger which

returned, and only this year my brother-in-law L. C. O. had a similar experience. I had put him on to a kill, and on arriving at the spot at 10 A.M. he met the tiger standing facing him; he fired and found plenty of blood. The tracks were lost owing to the tiger taking to short grass on the hill-side. Next day I accompanied L. C. O., and by the merest chance suggested visiting the kill before trying to pick up yesterday's spoor; the kill had been dragged several feet; so that night I sat up, but I was driven away by a raging monsoon which threatened the collapse of my machân. The following morning I found the kill had been again dragged a considerable distance, and what is more, the tiger only moved away on hearing my approach; the lair was hot. Very little more of the carcase had been eaten, and at first sight I thought that some dry reeds had been laid over the remains, but a closer examination revealed they were the rib bones picked as clean as if they had been scraped white.

That was the last of this tiger, for although I sat up, torrents of rain and dense mist drove me home, and next morning Stripes had not returned. The jungle men were confident it was the wounded tiger, and that there was no other about.

The flesh remaining was hardly sufficient for a meal, and one can only ascribe to his wounded condition the fact that he had returned and protected it in the hopes of feeling fit to finish it later on.

Towards the end of May I visited my favourite haunt on the foothills, and I there met with an extraordinary occurrence. Seeing fresh tracks of

tiger I sent for a cow and tied her up the same evening. I started off the following dawn, the tie-up having been placed on a fire path beside a steep banked stream, which was practically dry at this season. On nearing the spot we could see the cow had been taken, and on halting could distinctly hear the noise of crunching and dragging close by. Hoping to get me a shot the tracker led me into the nullah, and as I went I espied a tiger walking through the bamboo. Pushing my tracker to one side I stole up the bank, and while peering about I suddenly saw the head of a tiger bob up, and then its white chest, evidently taking a good look at me. I took careful aim and fired. "It's down," exclaimed my man. We went forward to the place but could find nothing, nor any signs of blood on the tracks. I was so mystified that I went back and took aim over again, having directed my man to crouch in the attitude of the tiger. Marking the spot, I walked back to find a bamboo had intercepted my bullet. I was terribly cast down, as I made sure the disturbance would spoil any further chance.

Anyway I had a chair tied to a tree that rose straight up from the river bed. The kill was in the bamboo on the level of the bank. As a further inducement to tempt Stripes, I tied up a goat below me in the river-bed itself. I sat up very early in the afternoon, and as often happens at this time of the year, a thunder-storm started muttering in the distance, followed by a strong wind which seemed to be blowing direct from me to the kill. However, as the goat was doing her

part nobly in the way of bleating, I concentrated my attention on the river-bed, at the same time keeping an eye on the opposite bank.

Nothing seemed to stir, and it was getting on for 5 o'clock; the storm, thank goodness, had not come my way, but the wind still seemed to be blowing adversely. Something, an instinct I suppose, caused me to give a glance towards the kill, and there was a tiger facing me, actually standing on the kill. In bringing my rifle round it knocked a bough, with the only result that the tiger looked behind with a snarl. If it had looked in the direction of the sound it could not have failed to see me, as I was almost on the same level amongst totally bare branches. I dropped the brute on the top of its meal with a bullet between its shoulders.

Not caring to sit up any longer than necessary, I three times called loudly for my men but got no response, although they had assured me they were within easy hearing. Knowing that they would anyway turn up at dusk, I lit a cheroot, making myself as comfy as possible. An hour could not have elapsed when I noticed the goat seemed uneasy, stamping its foot and staring fixedly. Turning my eyes in the direction I saw another tiger standing broadside on in the bamboo, looking straight at the goat; an easy pot-shot which I took full advantage of. For the second time two tigers over one kill, and in broad daylight this time!

On the 17th of February 1921 a tiger killed a specially bred heifer, the result of a half-bred Jersey bull I had acquired to improve the milk-

ing strain of my stock. I was very sick about it and vowed vengeance. I sat up, but though the heifer had not been touched or dragged, Stripes did not put in an appearance till sunset. In spite of a long shot and the glare of the setting sun in my eyes, I got in a bullet and he charged off. Next morning I sent word to a friend, Capt. F., asking if he would like to follow up with me. We tracked the whole of that day, putting him up once, when we each fired and missed. Just a flash of yellow through the grass. The tiger was evidently very very sick, lying down frequently, never going far in one direction, just circling round. The grass was so thick and high we could see no distance. In the evening we left the tiger almost in the same spot where he had lain in the morning after our shots.

F. left me, convinced I would find the brute dead in the morning, but should this not prove to be the case I was to send for him. The next day, hearing me coming, the tiger got up and moved on, so I sent back for F. and our tiffin, which we consumed before again taking up the tracks; these led us into long grass, so I made my favourite shikari Kerta climb a tree every few yards, and within a very short distance I noticed him crouch and then gesticulate towards us. The tree was fairly climbable, but I had leather-soled boots with no grip, whereas F. had on a pair of rubber-soled shoes. As the tiger was not fifteen yards from us there was no use delaying till I got into socks; the pause might give the tiger time to think of a rush towards us, so F., who had just returned from home and added to his waist

girth very considerably, managed by dint of pushing and hauling on the part of Kerta, to get within view of the tiger.

A neck shot settled the trick. My bullet of the 17th had hit the tiger plumb in the centre on the last rib, smashed the edge of its liver, carried on through the diaphragm and had come out behind the right shoulder. How he lived so long is a wonder.

On the 9th of September I left to join B. in camp, to help him to bag a tiger.

He was staying at a spot where I have shot most of my tigers, and I reckoned it would probably be a simple matter to get him the desired trophy; but as this account will unfold, it was a more difficult task than I anticipated, for subsequent events showed we were dealing with a tigress of most consummate cunning and cruelty.

The evening of my arrival "khabar" was brought of a buffalo having been killed, and B. remarked "it looks as if you had brought me luck!" I wish it had been the case!

It was too late to fix up a machân that night, but the kill being near we went to the spot and lay close by in wait, commanding the approach, of which there was only one. When it was too dark to see the sights of our rifles we gave it up.

Next morning on visiting the kill it was found the tiger had come during the night, but strange to say had only dragged the carcase a few feet. It was a splendid spot to sit over, with a very fine tree to tie our chairs in. I say chairs, as B. was anxious that I should sit with him to turn on

his electric light, which we intended fixing for use after dark. The ground rose sheer behind us, the wind too was more in our favour than it proved to be over any other kill (and in the three weeks we sat over many). I think there is nothing so wearisome as an all-night sitting over a kill for a tiger that never comes. Despite all that was propitious, the only sound that gave us a momentary palpitation was a mongoose which swore loudly at us; and two tired-out men returned next morning to the forest lodge, where I, anyway, slept like a log, after our 9 o'clock breakfast.

It would be too tedious to give details of all the kills that took place. We counted seven, and we sat up over four of them, each for two nights in succession, without any result.

We got the blue funks one night when perched in a none too thick tree growing on the side of a very steep hill. A raging thunder-storm broke and we heard one tree crash close beside us. As the situation became risky, neither B. nor myself being featherweights, we fired off our guns at midnight to attract our shikaris, but of course they did not hear us, so they said !

My friend B. fortified himself with an occasional pull at his flask. "Beastly stuff," he remarked, and said he would never bring it again, but I fancy he felt more confidence than I did when an unusually strong blast threatened to corkscrew our tree from its roots.

Before I come to the pith of my story I must say a word about B. He was geniality intensified. I hope he won't mind my mentioning his age—71 years this month. I only hope I may have

his vigour and activity at the same age. He sprinted up the ladders and twisted round boughs like a veritable Malabar squirrel; as for myself, I developed a slight touch of pleurisy from a strain due to perpetually clambering up and down those rickety bamboo ladders, but as regards B., the longer the ladder the more pleased he seemed to be, and to think that after all the trouble and those weary nights he should have had no luck!

On the 21st I left for my estate, but on the 24th I returned to camp at 5 P.M. to find B. already sitting up over another kill which had taken place the previous night; it's a wonder wings had not started to sprout from B.'s shoulders, as really he seemed to spend most of his time up a tree. This time the tiger had shown the acme of cruelty, the trackers told me; the unfortunate tie-up must have been lying down when Stripes appeared on the scene, and stealing up, literally laid his weight on the unlucky bait and commenced to munch the quivering meal. Of course I did not attempt to join my companion, and really as I had had a long walk I was glad of a night's good sleep. Next morning I roused the shikaris early and proceeded to the spot to find B. as cheerful as ever although still no tiger, and as he could not speak the native language he knew nothing of the agony his unfortunate tie-up had gone through. On inspection, all that the trackers had told me was fully borne out, the contents of the paunch were smeared flat and smooth on the hide of the kill; the throat had not been seized and everything pointed to the truth of the report. This tie-up, by the way, had been chained to a

tree, so the tiger had been unable to drag it away.

A peculiarity which I have never noticed in other tigers was that this one invariably ate all down the spine, evidently liking the saddle, and then stripped the ribs. All the kills whether tie-ups or stray victims were treated in this way, showing it to be evidently the work of the same tiger.

The position on the 25th was as follows: There were three kills; the one described above, over which I put watchers to keep off vultures; and a tie-up some two miles further on, which I took in my morning's rounds; and another in the opposite direction, which B. visited. On Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday there was no result, and by this time the kill had become so offensive it was abandoned to the vultures.

On Thursday the 28th I set off early as usual with two men, so that in the event of a kill one man could always be left behind to keep watch till the coolies brought the chairs and other paraphernalia incidental to a sit-up. We found the young bull tied here as frisky as ever, and having seen it watered, and plenty of grass supplied, we started on our homeward journey about 7 A.M., going back by a different route on the off-chance of a shot at a chital. We had not gone far when we heard a roar. Both the trackers exclaimed, "A bear!" I was carrying a 9 mm. Mannlicher magazine rifle of my wife's, and my pet shikari, Kerta, had my Westley-Richards Explora shot and ball gun. This I had been taking for the last three or four days

only, with some No. 1 cartridges, as my wife had asked me to try and get her a pea-fowl; and I had with me only three ball cartridges. Anyway, before leaving the path and entering the jungle in the direction from which the noise came, I exchanged the magazine for my Explora, and wished I had brought more ball ammunition, as the men hinted at two bears being the cause of the row.

Just before turning off the path I pointed out to the trackers that crows seemed greatly interested in something in the direction we were going, and I queried whether the noise we had heard might be accounted for by a tiger. They agreed, so we went with extra caution. Everything was in our favour; it was still fairly early, the wind was gently blowing towards us, and although it had not rained for the last few days, the leaves were very wet after the night. I myself had on an excellent pair of rubber crepe stalking boots, and I was careful that no sound should be made, so much so that when, as often happens, a "wait-a-bit" caught my clothes, I signed to the man following to disentangle me. Keeping our eyes well skinned, we proceeded slowly forward, and as we neared our objective, a solitary vulture flapped from a tree close by, and we nodded to each other significantly. A few paces more and again Kerta the tracker paused, and now occurred an extraordinary thing. Although many's the time I have spotted something before the tracker in front of me, one knows that he is hampered not only by having to keep a look-out, but also

by choosing the path, avoiding stones, twigs, and thickets where possible; but in this case I also had a tracker following behind me, and yet neither of them saw the sight that met my eyes until the raising of my gun attracted their attention. As I remarked before, Kerta had paused; he peered ahead to his left, and I did the same to the right, and there, within fifteen yards of me, was the form of a sleek and glossy tigress, lying on her side with her back to me, her head and shoulders concealed by the trunk of a tree; otherwise she was in full open view. As I covered her with my gun she happily flicked her tail in luxurious repletion after a heavy meal. Instinctively, being at such very close quarters, I aimed at her spine. Bang! and with a roar she reared herself up on her forelegs and glancing over her shoulders snarled at me, but her hind-quarters were motionless—my aim had carried true. I then landed her with my left barrel through the shoulder into the chest, and over she rolled; but as I hastily ejected the two empty shells, and was ramming my third and last cartridge home, she twisted round and seized one of her hind legs in her mouth, crushing the bone and tearing the flesh from it; so I gave her the third barrel. All this happened in less time than it takes to write. Kerta was so scared that when I hastily asked him to take my now useless gun and hand me the small rifle, he simply edged away. The tigress, in the meantime, was also doing her best to move away from us, but she only managed to drag herself some five yards, and before expiring, vented her rage by rending

the low branch of a tree, under which she died.

I sent the spare man back to camp for B., and sat down to a light "chota hazri" of coffee and eggs (which I always take with me), after which Kerta and I strolled round to see what the tiger had been feeding on. We found the fresh remains of a cow, which had strayed from an adjacent village; and observing traces of an earlier kill, I followed these up, and came upon the head of a wild pig, I should say about four days old; so this tigress had been having a really good time of it before I downed her.

To give the uninitiated a better idea of what close quarters fifteen paces meant, I found the thick felt wad had actually hit her. It was lying at the edge of her lair, and a thin cardboard wad was lying within 18 inches of the spot.

I am almost sorry to relate that on cutting her open I found the embryo of four cubs, all perfectly shaped, but no bigger than mice, and she herself taped 8' 3".

I have never seen a tigress with more than three cubs, so it was distinctly interesting to find one that had conceived more.

TRACKING GENERALLY AND FOLLOWING UP WOUNDED TIGER

A few hints might not come amiss to the tyro, and help to save a lot of disappointment, possibly lives.

When stalking I am a believer in sauntering; it stands to reason the eye can then take in far more

detail, and is less likely to miss anything unusual. Always put your best tracker ahead. Do not go in front yourself, no, not even if you are following a wounded tiger. It is up to you to prevent any accident; your eyes should be anywhere but on the ground.

You naturally shoot to kill, but if you have wounded a tiger, leave well alone; curb your impatience to follow up; an hour's delay may save a mauling. This may sound cruel, but the old stager who reads this should remember that the tiger wounded off a machân late in the evening may have the whole night in which to suffer.

Have two, and in long grass even three, good trackers to go with you after a wounded tiger—one ahead to track and the other two behind to search out the surrounding cover. Where the grass is long, send them up trees every few yards to look down into the undergrowth.

When sitting over a kill be as silent as you can, and motionless; a hand or foot moving might just catch the eye of a watching tiger. If I simply *have* to move from cramp or pins and needles, I do so as imperceptibly as possible. This equally applies when sighting tiger or panther. Unless the quarry is on the bolt for some reason or other, don't fling round your rifle; wait till the head is concealed by a bush or tree before bringing your weapon to bear on the spot at which you intend to shoot. If you keep perfectly still, a tiger seldom sees you, although he appears to be staring straight into your face.

CHAPTER XIII

DEER AND ANTELOPE

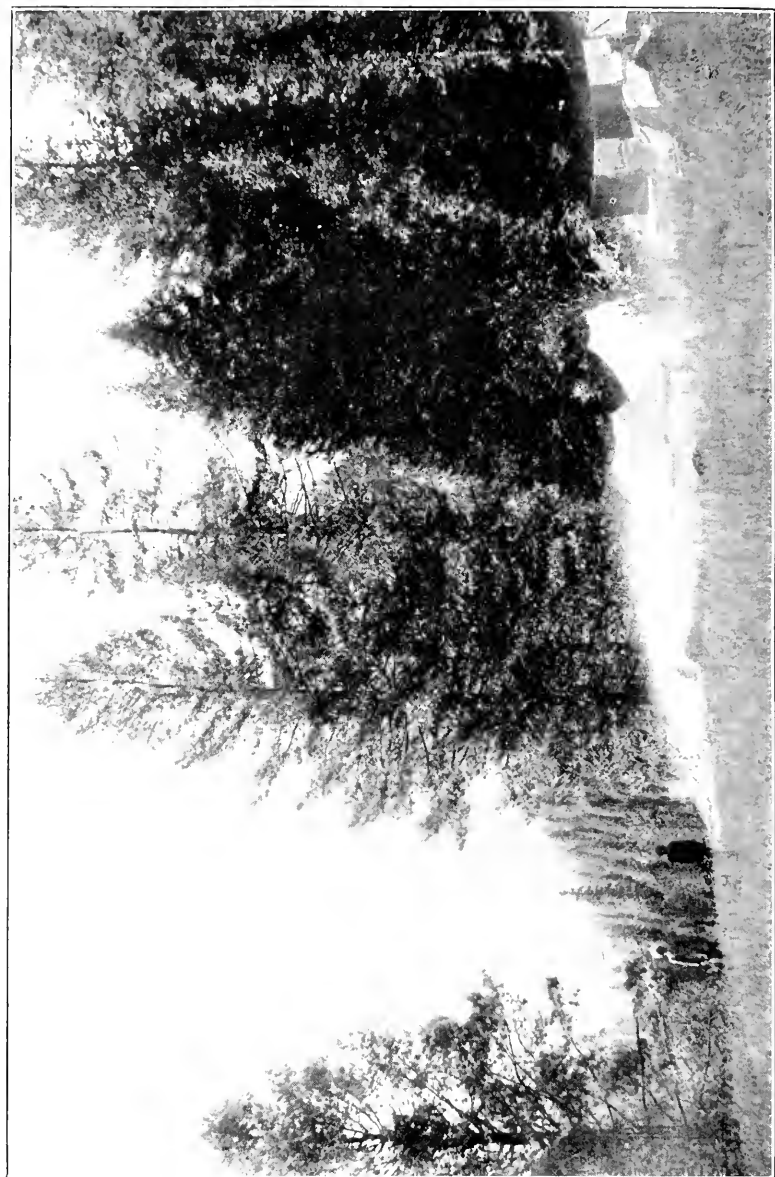
“If abroad in the Asphodel meadows some Lord of the Valley be found.”

I HAVE never devoted much time to deer, for I have generally only hunted them as opportunity allowed, when after other game. Their pursuit requires as much, if not more, skill than that of other game, and I have always enjoyed it; but I have never had the ambition to slay more than one or two of each species of most of these beautiful animals.

BARASINGH AND THE KASHMIR VALLEY

I have never, to my regret, shot any of the Himalayan goats, as neither the time available, nor my head for heights, would allow of it.

My first visit to Kashmir was many years ago, when I was crippled from a fall, and joined my father and mother at Gulmarg. While there I slew two of the ordinary black bear. One of these was an interesting instance of a bear eating flesh. I was sitting up for a panther, and heard a cow bellowing in great distress up the hill above me. The bellowing turned to moans



"WARDROP CAMP" IN KASHMIR, 1920.

and then died away. We reconnoitred next morning and found a cow with all one hind-quarter eaten; there were numerous claw marks on the body, but no wounds on the throat. It was evident that the poor beast had been held down, and eaten alive until it died. There were bear tracks all round. I rigged up a little machân, and sat in it all day working at Pushtoo. At about 4 P.M. the bear, one of medium size, turned up, and I was glad to slay him.

My next visit to Kashmir was in 1920 with my wife. We first shot bear eating mulberries; and I think the local villager impressed me more than anything else. He ran to tell me there was a bear up a tree. I was up on some cliffs, and because I would not come down quickly enough, the good fellow actually tore out his beard in handfuls. However, we were in time.

After that we did the usual September emigration to one of the Sind valley nullahs and got hold of a really good one, and shot two stag of 40 and 41½ inches, 10 and 12 pointers. I do not propose to describe this sport in detail, as it has been and is often written about. I enjoyed the time immensely, but I admit that the very early rise in bitter cold and then the trek up some thousands of feet, only to get frozen again until daylight comes, does not amuse me. But the scenery was fine and so was the air; and the autumn colouring, with whole hillsides of copper and gold, was gorgeous.

One stag gave me a bad time. We heard him calling in the dim dawn on a bare hillside, and, thanks to some good work of my shikaris, we got

close up under his feet. I poked my head up and got a shot with the .318 at twenty yards, a lying-down shot. The stag vanished over a little knoll, and we never saw him again, nor did we find any blood. The memory of this shot grieved me all that day and for many days, but this year I met the local man again, and he told me that the stag had gone, not where we believed and searched, but in an entirely different direction into more open, bushy country, and had dropped dead; that he had seen the body, but that the local herdsman had cut off the horns.

This information was volunteered. The man had nothing to gain by telling a lie and I believed him. I do not care what rifle or bullet of this class one uses, this occasional entire absence of blood is the curse of the small bore. I have often seen it.

This stag must have taken a line over shale slopes for his first half-mile. With the Central or South India trackers one would never have lost him.

This little .318, however, vindicated itself with the next stag, a 12-pointer, and dropped him dead at eighty yards. This animal was calling in a dark pine forest and gave us a pretty stalk uphill, and well in view.

I went up to Kashmir again this year, hoping to get a really big stag, but I was too late for the calling season and too early for the real cold weather, when the stag come low down. I saw one glorious 10-pointer five hundred yards off and a 10- and a 12-pointer in range. But these

two were not as good as those I had, so I never fired my rifle. Still the trip was good, and the country as beautiful as ever. I think, however, that the Kashmiris are getting more and more grasping in their demands.

Gond.—I spent a delightful ten days at Christmas once with my friend C. He had a line of elephants, and we used to beat with them all day, with occasional days after chital and small game in between. We got five good stag, and I got an exceptionally good head, which I still have, but whose measurements are not within my reach, as I write in the jungle. He was beautifully mounted by Van Ingen, and I lent him to the R.A. Mess, Meerut, with the natural result that he was allowed in about three years to become moth-eaten, and is now reduced to horns and skull. Mounted heads are always an anxiety. They are fatal in a public place, where they never get the attention they require.

This stag I shot alongside my elephant. He had crouched hoping to avoid detection, and would have done so but for keen-eyed Babu of the Meerut Tent Club.

Sambhur.—These animals undoubtedly give grand sport and I have pursued them in all parts of India. My best head was 41 inches, and I got this in a rotten way. In 1922 I was sitting up near a river, for a tigress which I subsequently killed. She was a flighty uncertain creature, and when I heard her grunting and yawning first up- and then down-stream I tucked myself up for a solid undisturbed night's sleep. I was awakened by a splashing of feet in the water, which

was about a hundred yards from me. I could not see the animal, as it was down-stream and behind me. The footsteps crossed and turned up-stream along my bank; and presently a fine sambhur came absolutely under my tree, and I shot him with the 12-bore and a patent bullet in the shoulder. There was very little report, and the stag dropped dead.

This impressed me tremendously with the power of the smooth-bore and patent bullets, and I still believe in its efficiency for short ranges; but at any distance I have found such inaccuracy that I have given up using it. My gun is a good but an old one, and I freely admit the fault may be entirely with the gun, and that its bore is so much worn that it cannot shoot a bullet.

Chital.—I have shot specimens of this stag all over tiger-shooting India, but my best heads (36 inches and over) came from H.H. the Maharajah of Kapurthala's preserves on the Nepal frontier. These beasts, when going fast across open sôts, give pretty shooting, but they are above all the animal for "still" hunting.

Nilghai.—Common beasts that want much lead, chiefly useful for a hungry camp. In rideable country they should be ridden and speared, not shot.

Parah or Hogdeer.—These, I consider, are *par excellence* the animal for howdah shooting; and in our preliminary week beating in pig for the Kadir Cup, with a strong line of elephants, we used to shoot a certain number of these deer. They were badly wanted for food by the

large camp of natives and followers, and in addition made excellent shooting with their straight gallant rushes.

Blackbuck.—I suppose the experience of every big-game shot is the same, that when he is beginning he shoots a certain number of blackbuck, and that gradually he reaches a stage when only a particularly good head, or urgent need of food, would tempt him to sacrifice another of these graceful animals.

More shooting accidents happen with blackbuck than with any other game. In North India blackbuck frequent high crops and sugar-cane where there are numerous cultivators at work, and the use of a low-trajectory high-velocity rifle in their pursuit requires the greatest care. I have luckily never been present at any accident; the nearest approach to it being when F. and I went out and separated. He had a horse and tied it up to the well-run of a sugar-cane field. Somewhat later he shot a buck on the near side of this field. The bullet went across the field and then through his horse's hock. The horse recovered.

I have never shot in the big blackbuck countries, and 22 inches is my biggest head.

Chinkara.—This antelope is found nearly all over India, frequently in the same ground as blackbuck, but more often in the vicinity of ravines and broken ground. The finest heads I have come from the Jumna Kadir near Agra, where one Christmas after the war I had excellent shooting.

Four-horned Antelope and Barking Deer.—These animals are met with in most big-game

jungles, and if there is no danger of frightening away big game one cannot wish for prettier or more sporting shooting than that which these little creatures, whether driven or still-hunted, afford to a light rifle.



A. E. W. AND SAMBHU, 1920.

CHAPTER XIV

BUFFALO AND SOME REGRETS

“The very poignancy of such regrets
With Time’s kind touch shall be their anodyne ;
More potent than ‘ the herb of Mandragore,’
The surgeon’s kindly drug relieving pain,
‘ Syrup of Poppies,’ or than pillowed hops
To ease the mind of every discontent
And call it to the scenes of happy days.”

THANKS to an introduction from The Commissioner Mr. B., the ruler of a certain Indian state very kindly gave me leave to shoot one buffalo in his territory : a permission I much valued, as this fine and rare animal is, to my mind, one of the chief prizes of all Indian sport.

To reach our ground we had a seven days march down a good country road with heavy jungles throughout its length on either side.

I had been lent an elephant, and used to send my servants and breakfast on with it while I walked, and the carts with all the kit would arrive some hours later. By this method I got twelve or fifteen miles daily exercise, and my servants arrived fresh.

The secret of comfortable marching in India, especially if sport is not anticipated immediately on arrival at the far end, is to reach camp having

had exercise oneself, but with one's servants fresh.

I used to make a state entry on the elephant at the end of a march, and the simple jungle people would make profound obeisance to the big beast, as to one connected with their worship.

The officials and people all through this trip were delightful : simple, unspoiled, and willing.

We saw chital daily on the road, but the only shikar I had was in sitting up for wild dog. We came on a freshly killed four-horned antelope, and saw three dogs sneak away before we got there. I had only my gun with round bullets with me. I climbed into a tree about twenty-five yards from the kill. The wild dogs came back after an hour and I took a careful pot-shot, and missed. The dogs ran off a short distance. I shinned down the tree, had another careful shot, and again missed. Then the dogs cleared out. I was much vexed, for I had never shot one, and I wanted also to get rid of these pests. Assuredly my 12-bore, which is old and worn, cannot fire round bullets with any attempt at accuracy.

During the last two marches the great tracks of buffalo were apparent along the road in increasing numbers : and when I pitched camp on the last day of the march I realized that we were in the haunt of these fine beasts. There were many of them in that country, frequenting by night, for the most part, the rice-fields and clearings of existing and deserted villages, and moving at dawn into the adjacent jungles. The country was plain jungle, with outcrops in all directions of rocky hills a few hundreds of feet high. The

jungles consisted of fair-sized trees with much grass at foot, generally breast-high and often over a man's head.

There was a full moon, and we used to go out as day broke; and, if lucky, we made out grey masses looking very solid in the uncertain light of the moon and early dawn. Then we would follow and stalk them until either we decided there was no head big enough, or until the buffalo, after several alarms, started away in earnest. The grass was so long that the trackers said further pursuit was useless. For the first few days I listened to them. After that we took up the tracks and never left them all day, in the ordinary bison-tracking manner.

At first, when we did not see the buffalo in the rice-fields, we generally came on them in the lighter surrounding jungle.

I spent seven days after buffalo, either morning and evening, or all day, seeing them singly or in larger numbers.

One evening we spotted a herd grazing in overgrown deserted rice on the edge of scrub about four miles from camp. We stalked round, but on getting within shot found the grass so high that I had to climb a tree in order to see.

There was no bull with a really good head, although there was a cow with thin, but wonderful, horns that I estimated at 12 feet from tip to tip, round curves and across forehead. I had the pleasure of watching this herd of eleven animals for nearly an hour from close range. Returning home, we came on absolutely fresh

marks of tiger. I put in soft-nosed bullets, and so lost a chance at a fine bull which we met on the road, and which went off with a crash as I was changing cartridges.

The great trouble was the length of the grass. We stalked a herd one day into an open clearing that we should call a *sôt* in North India. I knew there was a good bull, for I saw his horns ; but I could see nothing to fire at, and finally, in despair, climbed a tree which covered a lighter patch of grass. A cow and a calf, and later two cows, grazed directly under my tree, but I was glad the bull did not come, for it would have been an unsporting shot.

Another day we came on a herd early in the morning, and, after getting up to them three times, we gave them our wind badly and they went off. Here again we saw only a forest of horns, though in our third stalk we made a *détour* at a run, got behind the herd, and came on the bull. But I could only see a brown mass with no definite mark to aim at, and so did not fire, to the ill-concealed disgust of my little jungle men. This bull was on the track at the far side of the herd : apparently, so far as my limited knowledge goes, these animals always stand facing their tracks, with, in the case of a herd, the bull furthest away and all his harem as sentinels.

After the herd went off the bull soon took a line of his own, and we followed him from 7 A.M. to 3 P.M. We had great fun tracking, and got up to him five times, and used to see his big horns peeping out above the grass. We tried to get up to him, stooping, crawling, and once up



"WE FOUND THE BULL."

a tree, but he spotted us every time; he was quite as frightened as we were, and by 3 P.M. he had been going at high speed for a long time, heading apparently for Ceylon, and so we bade him adieu. The long grass was heavy walking and, in the morning, very wet and cold.

On the seventh day we saw nothing in the early morning, came back to breakfast, and then began a long day's search. As we went along the road we came on the morning's tracks of a big bull. The jungle men said he would probably be lying up in a certain clearing, so we made a bee-line there, and found the bull standing in the middle of it. Luck was good, for the whole of the bull's shoulder was above the grass and the stalk was over bare ground under saplings, with only a few dead leaves and no grass. I got a clear shot at seventy yards with the .470, raking diagonally at the junction of neck and chest. The bull galloped a hundred yards and fell dead. I fired other shots, most of which hit but were not needed. The solid nickel bullet made a small entrance wound, and caused no bleeding until he fell.

This was a really fine bull, with horns 9 feet 2 inches long and 18 inches in girth at the base. I was more than pleased. I had shot my one and only buffalo, and, especially after getting so fine a specimen, would not have wished to kill another of these magnificent beasts. They are certainly impressive animals, and when one is close to and in good view of them in grass, one is struck by their solid massiveness. Although their power of scent

is, of course, extremely acute, I think their eyesight is little inferior to it.

After this I had ten days to devote to tiger, one of which had been calling round camp. There was a kill the day after I shot the bull. The local man had tied the cow (buffaloes are never tied up in this country) to the tiger's bank, and I had been unable to supervise. The mistake was obvious on my arrival; however, I made the best of a bad job, and selecting a high tree some way from the bank, I removed all traces of work and smell so far as I was able. A tigress came at 8.45 P.M. And I suppose she wished to show that I had underrated her power of scent, for she started sniffing a good hundred yards off, as if she were being poisoned by a real bad smell. She continued sniffing until she was under my tree, then darted to the undergrowth of the opposite bank, and amused herself for the next two hours in making short rushes, breaking boughs, and never coming out. Then she went off. Next morning's tracks confirmed her behaviour, as incomprehensible as that of all her charming sex.

We then moved on twelve miles to where a man-eating tigress and cub were giving trouble. This pair were said to have killed forty-five people in the last six months. This figure was probably an exaggeration, but undoubtedly many lives had been lost; and the postal runners had been intercepted for days together.

We tied up at once and had a few quiet days, during which two women were killed. One body was never found, and the other had been

recovered and buried before I could get there. On both occasions I heard too late to inspect the victims.

I had no shikaris of my own. Three or four of my old reliable men and a couple of bicycle orderlies would have made all the difference.

Our only excitement was that when tying up one day we were all treed by a rampageous cow, and only released by the elephant, who met the cow in single combat. The cow charged, nothing loth. The elephant gave a flying kick and missed. The cow gave the elephant a shrewd prod with her horns, and recoiled. That was the end of round one. In round two both animals charged; but the elephant got his kick home on the cow's nose, and I thought he had broken her neck. However, the cow picked herself up and went off with a very crooked head, and we climbed down. She was a lean cow and an ugly one, but I never saw a better.

To my surprise, one of our tie-ups was killed by the tigress and cub. I sat up all night, but nothing came.

The tigress and cub had spent the night killing another tie-up four miles away, and had dragged it into a cramped nullah with awkward, thick undergrowth. This spot gave no facilities for sitting up, and was moreover in deep shade. So we extracted this kill, made away with it, and tied up a new cow near the old one.

I spent a long time over the arrangements, and then went home for a couple of hours sleep, having had none the night before.

The cow was picketed to a log buried in

the middle of the nullah. We tested this, and decided it was strong enough.

On returning to sit up I found that a whippy bough with a few leaves at the end interfered with the view in one direction; as, however, it did not impede the view of the cow and her surroundings, I left it. It would have made a noise and taken time to remove it.

Shortly after I had got into the machân a wild buffalo, with two tame cows he had annexed, came and grazed under my tree, and I got some good photos at close range.

The tie-up seemed bored and went to sleep.

At 1 A.M. I heard the low growl of a tiger. There was then a stillness almost painful in its intensity. At 1.15 the tiger drew one long, loud, very deep breath; he made no other noise, and charged. I was sitting up, acutely ready. There was no sound from the cow, nothing to deaden the noise of the tiger's galloping feet; then a blow, a second thud as the cow fell, and all was still.

I believe the cow never knew of her assailant. I am certain she was dead before her head reached the ground.

This experience confirms a similar one of mine years ago. I have never *seen* a tiger kill, only heard it. On this occasion the darkness was intense.

I waited for the sound of his teeth before switching on the light. There was a dragging noise. I turned on the light—no tiger, no kill. For many seconds I switched the light high and low, but could see nothing. There was a noise of crunch-



"A WILD BUFFALO GRAZED UNDER MY TREE."



"AND I GOT SOME PHOTOS AT CLOSE RANGE."

ing, proceeding apparently from beyond the one accursed clump of leaves I had not cut.

At last the tigress spotted me. She gave two loud roars ; I heard her gallop off, and then there was silence.

And so I lost this man-eater. She and her cub had killed ; she had dragged the heavy buried beam, and had been sheltered by the only leaves that could have hidden her from view. I grieved much at my own stupidity, and more at the toll of human lives this probably entailed. We waited two days, but the man-eater and her cub had evidently left that neighbourhood.

Major-General Nigel Woodyatt, in his interesting book, *My Sporting Memories*, discusses fully the question of how a tiger kills his prey.

I add my own views with diffidence to the expert opinion recorded. My experience is comparatively small, yet, for such as it is worth, my opinion is that in the majority of cases the tiger kills by seizing his prey by the nape of the neck or by the throat with his jaws, hooking the claws of one paw round the far side of the animal's nose and jerking it towards him, thus dislocating the neck, while his other paw clasps the withers. The bite on the neck is deep, but not the primary cause of death.

The bites on the throat may be found as well as those at the back of the neck, and are, I believe, often inflicted after death. They may or may not be combined with blood-drinking.

I believe that kills, by seizing the throat alone, or by gripping the withers and biting the nape of the neck, occur when the attack which I

have ventured to describe as normal, is impossible owing to the animal's horns or the position in which it is standing.

We marched back after this, and I sat up for a kill which had occurred on the march. It was on the edge of the most tremendous tiger and elephant jungle I have ever seen in my life. I long to be there when the grass is burnt.

I sat up at 3.30 P.M. At 4 o'clock the tigers (there was a brace of them) began speaking, and they called and sparred almost continuously until 6.30 P.M. It was then pitch dark. Against all my principles, I had had to drag the kill. At 6.45 P.M. one of the tigers came onto the kill and began dragging it. I turned on the light, made out the dim figure of a tiger in long grass, fired, and missed.

With all modesty, this is the first time I have missed with the rifle at night since having the electric light. The shot was a longish one, and I undoubtedly fired too quickly, fearing a repetition of the experience with the man-eater.

There was no noise, and nothing to be seen. I spent a sleepless night feeling I had missed; wondering, and trying to convince myself that I had hit.

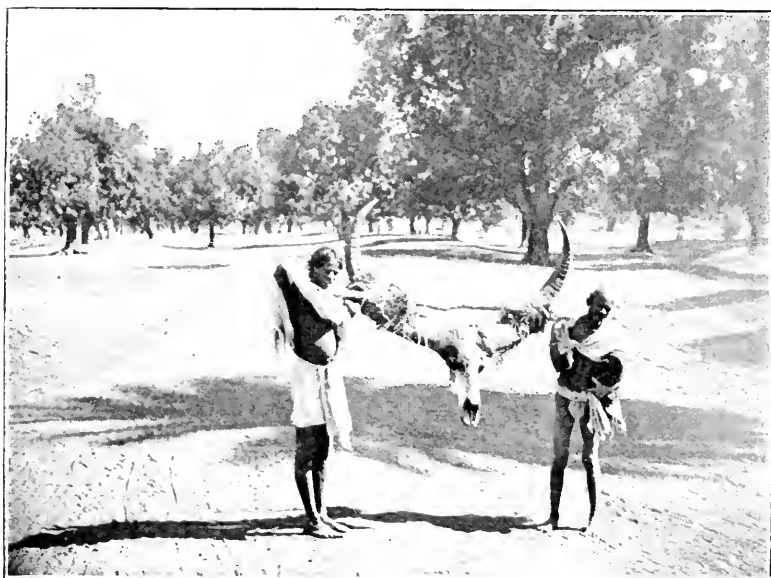
I have put "regrets" at the heading of this chapter. I know no regrets, no punishment equal to that of lying awake all night in a machân after a bad bungle of an easy shot.

We put buffaloes through the next day, but never found any blood or other indications of a wound.

Thus I bungled over these three tigers within



"THIS WAS A REALLY FINE BULL." (p. 161).



"THE GRAND OLD BUFFALO HEAD" (p. 167).

a fortnight of finishing the chapter in this book on sitting up. Pride goes before a fall.

And so I marched sadly back on the way to Travancore and elephant. And when I felt too sad I feasted my eyes on the grand old buffalo head.

CHAPTER XV

BISON, A FEW BEAR, AND ELEPHANT

“Methinks I see a hieroglyphic bat
Skim through the zenith on a slipshod hat :
While to drink infants’ blood with direful strides
A mashed potato on the whirlwind glides.”

I ALWAYS couple bison with this preposterous little rhyme, for it was one that my old friend H. used to sing when we were out on one of my first bison trips.

I did a certain amount of bison shooting during the early portion of my service, as it suited well for second leave when I was not engaged with tiger or pig. But I do not propose to write at great length on the subject, for my friend Morris has dealt with it more fully and better than I can.

I made a couple of trips alone into Mysore from Ootacamund, getting one or two bison on each occasion, but only one of them is worthy of remark. I hit the bull of a herd hard with the 8-bore Paradox. He went off, but we overhauled him soon and unexpectedly, in a nullah. I took a snap-shot, which knocked the bison and myself over, as I had never got the butt to my shoulder and caught the recoil on the end of my nose. I was bleeding hard and dazed, and could not get the cartridge out, so I made a blow at it with my

hunting knife. The unfortunate 8-bore has a gash on its extension rib to this day. Having reloaded, I flew after the bison. He was bleeding heavily and his tracks ran through high grass. Suddenly I heard a noise behind me, louder than the trackers ever made, and on turning round I found the bull was following me at a walk, poor beast, for he was very done. He lowered his head threateningly, and I killed him with a shot through the forehead at a distance of four or five paces. He had lain up, and let me pass. This was a good bull, and his head is now at Haileybury.

The next trip was with H. in the Billigirungums. We marched up eight miles from the nearest habitations, built our own leaf huts, and had a very jolly time. But H. was deeply in love then and did not take his bison seriously enough. So, having taught me his rhyme, he departed and I moved further into the forest.

I shot two bulls without incident. One of them I encountered accidentally, and killed with a .577, 6 drams and 600 grains hard lead bullet.

Then I had an all-day trek after a real big bull, an accursed beast who spent his time climbing up every hill he could find. But this was his undoing, for we saw him at last, making his usual climb. We ran round the hill and waited for him as he came down. I watched him come, rested the 8-bore on a fallen tree, and never felt so sure of a shot in my life. The bullet knocked him head over heels. Being inexperienced, I did not fire the left into him at once. He got up: I browned him, and then had the mortification of seeing him run swiftly down the hill.

We followed till dark. At first there was much blood, but heavy rain all night spoilt any chance next day, and so we lost this fine beast. I had undoubtedly fired too high, and I am sure this is how most bison are lost. The high dorsal hump is misleading.

My next trip was with B. of tiger-shooting days. We each got a bison.

I heard bear giving tongue one day; stalked, and came on the top of them; there were two of them sitting up, facing each other and howling. I shot one.

On another day B. and I explored a little hill a couple of miles from our bungalow. We each took one side of the hill. I followed an animal track that ran round the hill, and on looking up a gully saw gleaming eyes and a black mass descending with a loud "Woof, woof!" I threw myself back, and the bear passed over my legs down the hill, while I missed it handsomely. The misguided animal made a circuit of the hill, climbed up to where B. was awaiting it on his side, and was slain. That was bad luck on the bear.

My last trip, of those days, was alone to the country where H. and I had been. I had one servant with me and Coopoo the old shikari, lent me by C. of Ootacamund. Coopoo was an oldish man and a good and keen shikari, though fond of the bottle on off-days. He had long black hair, a very greasy cap, and features cast almost in the heroic mould. He is dead; but I can see the old boy now, looking at me with his big stern eyes, forefinger outstretched, saying, "Toch 'em op the wind," as some infernal brute, having

caught our wind, would blunder off like an express train.

This trip was not a success, and it culminated in a bad affair. We had stalked up to a herd who were above us. They suddenly came down on us at speed in close order. I do not think they were charging; they were frightened and bolting. It is easy to be wise afterwards. Anyhow, I fired right and left to turn them, and killed a cow and a young bull. The herd went past on both sides of us. The cow was dead, but I had to fire again into the youngster.

I stopped shooting at once after this, and reported to the Resident, through whom my father had got leave for me to shoot.

I had the hardest day I have ever had getting back to Ooty—a 75-mile bicycle ride, which included the Segur Ghât, a climb of several thousand feet. Heavy rain was falling; the road had been newly metalled. The brakes of the bicycle jammed with mud and gravel, and I had to carry it most of the way up. I lay down on the road in the rain every now and then, and was more glad than I can say to get to my father's house at 10 P.M. We all had several bouts of fever after that trip, and my servant died of it. Our food had been short, and the stream from which we drank was bitter with vegetation.

I went no more after bison until 1921, when the Jaghirdar of Y. very kindly gave me leave to shoot. This jaghir was given to the present owner's ancestor by the British, after the death of Tippoo Sultan.

I killed one bison at 120 yards; an easy shot

which calls for no comment, except on the long range at which I was compelled to fire.

The country consisted of undulating forest-clad downs culminating in heights of 5000 feet. The grass and undergrowth were up to and above a man's head in most places.

The work was hard. Our two longest days were 14 hours and 13½ hours respectively.

One day we started at 4.30 A.M., taking a lamp to light us on our way and to frighten the numerous wild elephant.

After an hour's tracking we came on a small party of four bison. But there was no good head among them. Later we climbed a plateau, which consisted of a small clearing of short verdant grass on a rocky ridge. Below lay the deep black valley whence we had climbed. Around us was the dark primeval forest, with the mist-clad higher summits rising from it as islands in a sea. The air was keen. A wreath of flying mist encircled us.

In front the ground fell steeply into a jungle of big trees with an undergrowth of high grass and straggling leafy shrubs. We came on the herd almost at once, and saw a cow's head some thirty yards off, but could not move for a quarter of an hour.

Màda, my head Sholaga tracker—brilliant in eyesight, hearing, and tracking—surpassed himself. Whenever the bison made a step or a noise he glided forward, taking me with him. It was all hand and knee work, putting aside any twig that might make a noise.

Once we pulled up with a bump within five yards of a cow. She filled the horizon. We

froze to stone until I feared I should have cramp. So we went on until the herd dashed off with a stamp and a rush.

I thought the day was done. But Mada stripped off his blanket and glided forward naked, faster than ever. With my boots and the heavy rifle I could not keep up. Mada seized the rifle and on we went. We reached a tree trunk commanding some sixty yards of elephant track with clearer undergrowth than usual on either side, and saw several cows, a young bull, and two young bison like English calves. Mada then pointed me out a black mass, seemingly hornless, and void of form. It took time for me to ask by signal of outstretched arms whether this was a good bull, for Mada and I had no common tongue. "Yes, yes," nodded his eager assent. I fired. The mass swayed and moved. I fired again and then again. At last the herd realized where its danger lay, and fled with the thunder of many feet. The bull too disappeared. We ran on and heard stumbling steps below us; and then we found him dead in a thicket, with a head of 36 inches—a fine bull, with jet black coat, in all his prime.

Poor Mada was killed by a bear in 1922.

I then went after an elephant, having heard from my friend Mr. van Ingen, the Mysore taxidermist, of one that had been proclaimed a rogue in that district. The Dewan and the officials of Mysore were exceedingly kind to me in connection with this animal as well as with the bison.

The elephant lived in the Begur Range, some fifty miles from Mysore. He had recently killed

one man by kicking him, after a long chase down a path ; he had also broken up the greater part of a man, cart, and bullocks complete, and was now outlawed. A price of 500 Rs. was on his head ; so I might, and naturally did, keep the tusks when I shot him.

I had studied live elephants in the Mysore elephant stables for hours, from every aspect, as well as a skull in the Zoo there, and I had had considerable recent practice with the .470 rifle.

My camp was at a pleasant bungalow, close to which lived Mr. Channiga-Raya, the forest ranger, a well-educated Mysore gentleman, to whose help and society I owe much.

The rogue lived three miles from the bungalow in a patch of jungle a few miles square, bounded by hills on two sides ; the Cubbany, a tributary of the Cauvery, made a third, and a fire-line the fourth side. This last was his favourite haunt.

The road to the jungle ran through young ràgi fields like green wheat, with meadows of black clover-like grass in which fat cattle grazed. Everywhere were the olive and grey tints which, with the sky, make the typical blue Mysore day.

The jungle itself consisted of big trees and bamboos, with, for the most part, a dense undergrowth of grass or young bamboo, which sometimes grew fifteen or twenty feet high. Here and there were lower clearings, with a hundred yards of view, but vision was generally much more restricted. Beautiful aisles of bamboo clumps were occasionally to be met with, growing apart like the pillars of a cathedral ; the delicate tracery of their boughs overhead was like the arched groin

of a roof, and the light below, subdued in the brightest sun, completed the resemblance to a great sacred building.

The elephant was marked down from early dawn before we started. We met parties of Kurubers, wild men of the woods, and these dwindled in numbers until we reached the last two men, who were actually watching the elephant and marking their progress by leaves. It was the military system of advance guard, vanguard, and patrols, admirably carried out by Mr. C.

On the first day we came early on the elephant. I could see the back of his head and one ear above the undergrowth. He gave me a shot that I had studied. I crawled to a tree and, resting my rifle, had a perfect shot at twenty yards; but I had to fire through some leaves, and one bamboo twig of the thickness of a pencil was just in front of my foresight. This I chanced, and fired. I heard no noise, and hoped he had fallen dead. Steps, at first towards us and then receding, soon undeceived me. I had missed, and the pencil twig was gone. But my attendants would have none of missing twigs. My name was MUD.

The elephant had not seen us. In the hope that he might take the shot for thunder it were better not to follow and frighten him.

"This is a *shaitan*, and there is witchcraft in it," said old Juman, my bearer. "It can only be defeated by prayer and—money."

We tracked the elephant for long next day, and came on him at 6.50 P.M., when I found the light too bad to fire.

The Kurubers were good fellows. They had a great respect for this elephant, yet they tracked him in all his ways.

On the third day we got news of the rogue before we left the bungalow at 9 A.M., and we saw him by 10 o'clock. He was in thick bamboo; we were thirty yards from him and a little above him. Finding no chance of a good view, I crept forward, parallel to the elephant's path. Presently I got a clear broadside view of an ear, and fired. Missfire. I reloaded and, getting once more a clear view of the ear, again pressed the trigger. Missfire. I thought of Juman; the rifle must be bewitched.

On hearing the second click the elephant swung towards us at a walk. I could only see the outline of his head in foliage. I reloaded and fired as best I might into this. If I had waited until he was in the open he would have been on the top of us. The elephant seemed to stagger as I fired and then became invisible. Immediately after my shot came a volley, my second barrel and one barrel each from Mr. C. and a rabbit of a Forest-guard. None of these hit, but they made a comfortable sound.

The elephant crashed off trumpeting. We followed up the blood tracks. Within half a mile the Kurubers' marvellous instinct spotted him standing still in dense cover. We made a little *détour* and got to within eighteen yards of him. Mr. C. was on my left, the "rabbit" and a Kuruber on my right. I could see a dim silent mass, but devil a mark could I see to fire at. I waited. There was a pull on my left shoulder,

as Mr. C. urged me to fire. The "rabbit" also distracted me with his pulling and pointing; then his nerve gave and he fired. I turned to curse him when the elephant, at the same second, strode forward and stood quarter-right towards me, leaning somewhat backwards, trunk raised on high, scenting for his adversaries. I fired. There was a delightful vision of upturned trunk and feet, a heavy thud and all was still.

So died the Rogue of Begur.

An inglorious victory indeed. The poor beast had no chance; stunned by a heavy rifle, he never knew where his foes were. Rogue he was, yet probably as much sinned against as sinning. He had no hairs on his tail, his ears were in ribbons, and he had three recent bullet wounds on him.

His tusks were just over 4 feet. I had reckoned he stood 9 feet 9 inches on a modest measure; but his foot circumference was 54 inches. So I had overestimated his height, on the usual basis of calculation of the foot circumference being half the height.

I went home and then returned to cut out the tusks. The news of the rogue's death had spread. The countryside went out to see him, and I met little groups of tens and twenties moving and talking freely where none had walked of late.

I found an official telegram on my return, ordering me to Simla at once, so I had to abandon expeditions which I had planned, after two other rogues elsewhere.

In January 1923, after the buffalo shoot, I was

able to take advantage of the generosity of H.H. the Maharajah of Travancore, who had given me leave to shoot bison and an elephant, and to keep the tusks.

I got every help from the Dewan and was most fortunate in enjoying the hospitality and help of Col. and Mrs. D.-D. I borrowed everything from them, and my shoot ran on very pleasant lines.

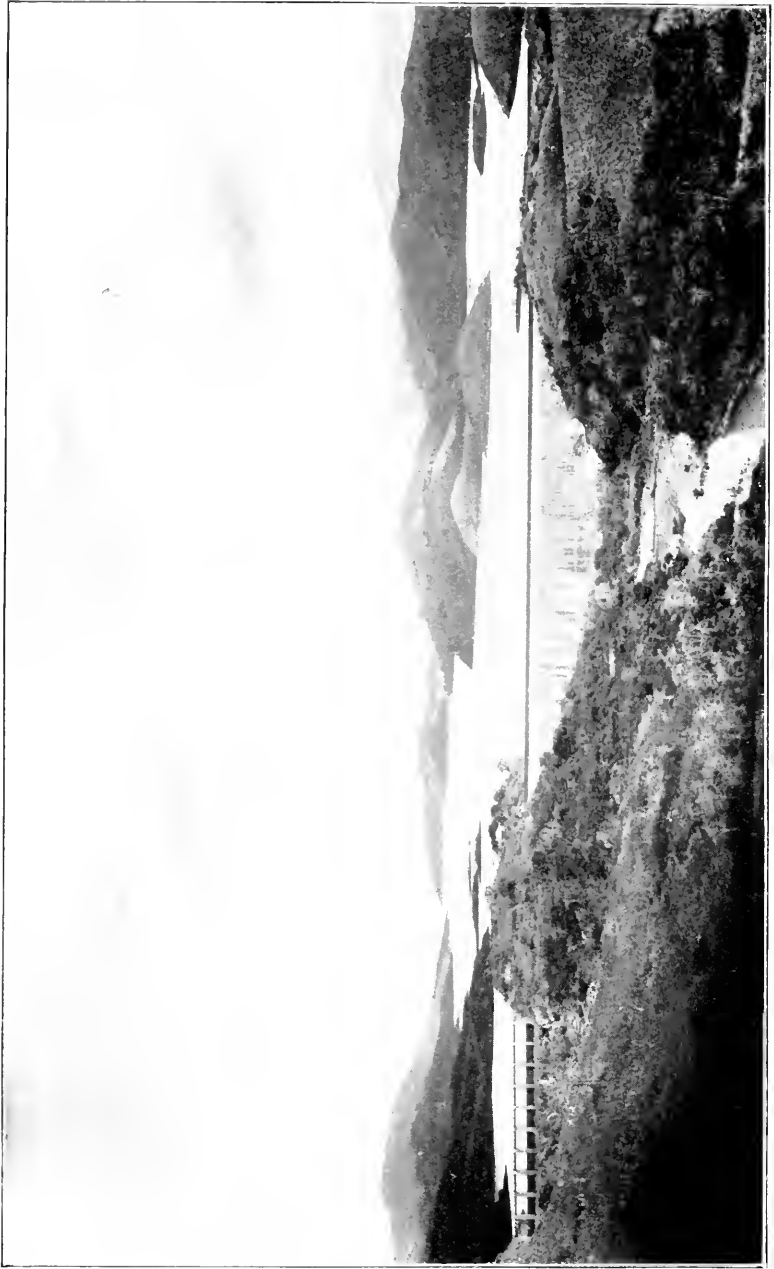
For three weeks I worked the country round my host's estate, on the Cardamum Hills and round the Peryar Lake, and shot two sambhur, one bison, and a really good tusker.

The sambhur were both long and lucky shots.

The bison was extinguished by the .470 at sixty yards. An easy shot, for we got above him and waited for him to come out into the open.

I was after elephant for ten days' actual hunting. In all the near treks, as well as on our successful day, D.-D. accompanied me and helped me more than I can say.

There was a considerable amount of *eter* everywhere. This is a densely matted jungle of close-growing young bamboo, twenty to thirty feet high. A man can only get through it by the elephant tracks. An elephant crashes through it like butter; and when one hears them on the hillside a few yards above one, while groping along the track oneself, one easily realizes that this *eter* is the most serious proposition that Indian big-game sport presents. One also often finds *lantana*, a high matted shrub of the marigold type, which, like the *eter*, is equally suited to an elephant and unsuited to a man. Only, in the *lantana* there is blue sky overhead. In both



THE PERVAR LAKE.

eter and lantana, except when shooting along a track, the maximum range of a rifle bullet may be taken as five yards.

Our first day's work was all in eter and lantana, in a big patch of which D.-D.'s shikaris had located a large and well-known tusker that frequented that neighbourhood. We followed this brute for hours, and heard him rumbling but never saw him. Then, unknowingly, we changed on to a rogue elephant which kept company with the big tusker. The next time we got close this brute trumpeted and went off. We ran along the trail in the lantana, for darkness threatened. Suddenly the whole track was darkened by the mass of the charging rogue, trunk upraised, mouth open, absolutely silent, and looking like the side of a house made of gutta-percha. Luckily one shot in the head from D.-D. turned the beast, and I, for one, was glad. I was too slow to fire. D.-D.'s shot was purely in self-defence and did no real damage, for we went to the spot next day, found the rogue had gone right away, and later heard of him in good health.

Where there was no eter or lantana the grass was generally high, except in the Cardamum forests. There had been unusually late and heavy rains.

The work was severe. Our longest day started with a two-mile walk; then we picked up tracks of a good tusker, followed him fifteen miles, and had a five-mile trek home again.

I spent five days on the Peryar, and was immensely struck, not only with the engineering work on it, but by its beauty, its winding channels,

and lonely grandeur. It has all and more than the charm of the lakes in the Trossachs, with the additional attraction that the banks and surrounding heights, instead of being monopolized by the Glasgow Corporation, are in the saner keeping of sambhur, bison, and wild elephant.

Here, as well as on the Cardamums, I was up with elephant, and examining them daily, but found no tusker good enough to shoot. I might only fire at one. On the Peryar all travelling was by water in a dug-out canoe. We frequently saw sambhur and elephant in this way, and on one occasion ran into a herd of twelve elephants swimming, but there was no good tusker among them.

The elephants swam very freely across the numerous arms of the lake, which were generally several hundred yards wide, and our normal method of picking up fresh tracks was to paddle round the edges of the lake and disembark when tracks were found.

We used to start at about 4 A.M., and those not rowing were glad of a couple of blankets. On our right, low over the lake, the Southern Cross showed brilliantly. Broken by the ripple of our bows, a bright streak of water pointed to the morning star, shining as I have never seen it shine elsewhere.

Finally I had given up all hope of an elephant, and my car was at the door to take me to the nearest rail *en route* to England, when my host suddenly heard news that the big tusker was once again in the neighbourhood. So we had a thirteenth-hour hunt, starting off at peep of dawn in D.-D.'s car.



“HE WAS MOVING AT A STEADY WALK.”

We got to our ground, and while the shikaris were reconnoitring, D.-D. heard the elephant below us. For elephant and bison shooting acute hearing is a really important asset to the hunter.

After some reconnaissance we closed for action, D.-D. having replaced the shikaris and conducting the stalk. The elephant was in a deep ravine, bordered on the one hand by an open hillside and on the other by a big patch of eter. The *col* was covered with man-high grass and was the intercepting feature between the elephant's present cover and the heavy jungle and eter of a big valley on the far side.

We got close to the elephant and could see him, but I could get no clear view of his head. He moved up the ravine, so we climbed a little and worked forward to intercept him; but the elephant had got a touch of our wind and was moving on fast. D.-D. turned out of the ravine and climbed along the grassy crest towards the col. We were "all-out," with our wind tested to the utmost.

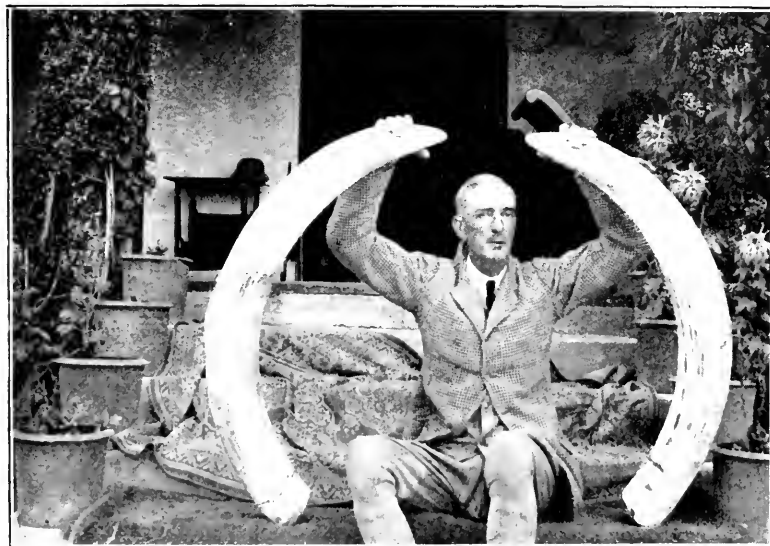
D.-D. heard the elephant, and signalled to me to hurry up. A last effort landed us in an open patch of grassy hill with some rocks. As the elephant's head appeared out of the cover we threw ourselves down. He was moving at a steady walk up to the col to cross to the next valley. He was seventy yards away and the whole of his head showed above the grass. An earlier reconnaissance by one of the shikaris, from a tree, had satisfied all doubts as to his tusks. I got a quick shot and hit him through the brain, for he reared up on the steep slope and fell over

backwards, being hit again in the head by both of us. He fell head down on the track he had just come up and never moved again. His tusks were 5 feet long, 17 inches in girth, and weighed 86 lbs. Double the circumference of his forefoot made him 9 feet 8 inches high.

So ended this happy trip. I caught the boat with a rush, and in all the journey down I thought of much kindness, of unselfish sportsmanship, and of the glorious time I had spent in these wild, beautiful, and little-known mountains.



DUG-OUT CANOE ON THE PERVAR LAKE (p. 186).



A. E. W. AND ELEPHANT TUSKS (p. 182).

CHAPTER XVI

SITTING UP

The velvet tread of lurking feet
Across the silent hours—

THE arguments for and against sitting up have been raised so frequently that only a brief mention of them is necessary here.

For sitting up it is claimed that it is specially adapted to the poor man; that it is often the only way in which, owing to difficulties of the ground or lack of beaters, a shot can be obtained; that the individual work done by a man who puts out his own tie-up, makes his own machân and spends the night in it, outweighs that done by a man in a beat, who, though he may have done the preliminary tie-up and machân work, must leave the handling of the beat to his shikaris; and, finally, that when sitting up a man will get a longer and more intimate view of his quarry in particular and of jungle nature in general than is possible in a beat.

Against sitting up it is said that it is poaching, non-sporting, and that animals get away wounded. Indeed, so strongly is this last view held, that in the United Provinces, rules have been expressly framed to discourage sitting up. These have

been the subject of acrimonious letters in the Press, some correspondents unfairly contending that they were so framed in order rather to help the man with the elephants at his disposal.

Personally, though I have shot considerably more in beats than sitting up, I am a strong advocate of the latter, with the proviso that one should not sit up if there is a reasonable chance of beating and circumstances allow of it.

Provided a good electric light is used, there is no reason to anticipate that more animals will get away wounded from sitting up than from a beat. Indeed the chances are all the other way. On the one hand is a picked careful shot at close range, and on the other, possibly, a shot at any speed, distance, or range.

The amount of skill needed to produce a tiger on his kill on a fair average of occasions is so considerable that it should relieve this form of sport from any stigma of being unsporting or unfair to these fine beasts.

Moreover, in the event of a bad shot having been made, there is always the follow-up on foot next day; a solace denied to the man with elephants.

A well-known authority on Indian big game states that the odds against shooting an animal by sitting up are at least 100 to 1.

Throughout this book I have hitherto made no mention of the numbers of animals shot, but I do so now in the case of my own experiences, although they are not remarkable in any way.

Tiger.—Sat up forty-four full nights; shot 11.

That is a tiger on every four nights. It should have been more, but for bad personal work of my own. *Vide* Chapters IV. and V.

Panther.—Sat up sixty quarter-nights; shot 12. That is a panther every five nights.

In comparing the tiger and panther results allowance must be made for the fact that the tiger were all shot over kills while the panther were nearly all over live goats.

The question of whole against quarter-nights does not arise in the comparison. If a panther means to come at all it is long odds that he will do so before 9 P.M. (my normal panther closing hour).

Similarly I do not think the relative boldness of the two species affected results. The panther is bolder and more likely to come to a tie-up than a tiger. With a kill the return of a panther should be a certainty; and with a live goat chances should be good, provided that the reconnaissance is thorough and the animal is known to be about.

Failing such reconnaissance, sitting up becomes simply an amiable and harmless method of mortifying the flesh.

I think the difference in my own results is due to the fact that the tiger figures were obtained generally later than those of the panther, and I benefited from the lessons learnt with the latter.

The panther averages themselves improved. Thus in 1921 I sat up five times and killed 3 panther. The first eighteen times I sat up I hardly ever heard and never shot one panther.

The above figures are not given in order to claim any special skill, but to show that with a worked-out system improved results can be obtained.

The carnivora, except when young or in love, seldom kill for pleasure. They kill to live, and killing is as much a business proposition with them as is his daily journey to the city man.

Unless a tiger has been scared by being fired at, he means to come back and eat, and he probably does come back to the immediate neighbourhood. In case of the animal's non-return it is for the sportsman to find out the reason in each case.

I have carefully examined all my own failures and embody their lessons under the various headings that follow. The *Field*, in a recent issue, complains that shooting books are too dictatorial. I certainly intend to be so now, writing in plain and direct terms for the benefit of the uninitiated.

NOTES ON SITTING UP WHERE BEATING IS IMPOSSIBLE

1. LOCALITY FOR TYING UP.—Paths and nullahs are the great highways of the carnivora. Tie up where the tracks of these animals are most frequent, selecting, if possible, a spot where nullahs and paths converge. In the hot weather tracks will be near water. I do not think it is fair, even for carnivora, to sit up over water. In tying up for sitting up there is a larger choice of ground than for the ordinary beat tie-up

where the vicinity of good cover and water are necessary.

In choosing sites you must use your discretion. Apart from the question of a suitable tree, if you select a place with long open vistas of nullah or road the tiger is more likely to see the tie-up; but it is not nearly so probable that he will give you a daylight shot as in a cramped quiet spot with ample grass and undergrowth.

2. DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TIGER AND PANTHER KILL.—Chiefly that tiger always eat buttock first, instead of the stomach portion as a panther does. But consult any big game book and ask your local men.

3. HOURS TO EXPECT TIGER AND PANTHER TO ARRIVE.—If they really mean business both should arrive by 9 P.M. Panther are not worth sitting up for after that hour. Always sit up for tiger all night. After 9 P.M. tiger generally come at about midnight or an hour before dawn. If your arrangements are good and the locality is quiet, you should have a good chance after 4 P.M. I have shot 6 tiger and 5 panther by daylight.

Time should be allowed for settling into the machân. I find I have to reckon on three-quarters of an hour to get the light fixed and everything in its place.

When sitting up for panther be seated and loaded before your goat is tied up. This is chiefly to avoid being discovered by the goat, which would then not bleat. But it is also because panther have a trick of arriving in a hurry.

Once I rode out thirty miles, and got into a

machân but did not load. My men tied up a goat and, as they turned, a big panther carried off the goat, leaving me cursing with unloaded barrels and a tedious trek home.

Having learnt my lesson, I was once more sitting up when my men whispered, as they tied the goat, that they had just seen the panther. Before they had gone five yards he lay dead alongside the goat, which recovered.

You should get good warning from jungle noises—sambhur, chital, monkeys, peafowl, foxes, and the like.

There is no certainty that animals will arrive noiselessly, though there is every probability. They may come with a noise like a buffalo. If they grunt or sniff it means that your chance of a shot for that night is gone.

Little can be deduced from a kill as to the chances of an animal's return. He may be a rogue who only drinks blood or eats a little of the hind-quarter. But these signs may be due to his having killed just before dawn. A good juicy kill, half eaten and perhaps covered up, is the most favourable sign.

I can find no confirmation of the native superstition that a tiger will only return to a kill he has left lying on its right side.

4. RISK OF DETECTION BY CARNIVORA from
(a) Eyesight ; (b) Hearing ; (c) Sense of smell.

(a) *Eyesight*.—Extremely good and the chief thing to be guarded against. (See Invisibility, below.)

(b) *Hearing*.—Also very acute. Second only to eyesight. (See Silence, below.)



"A SPECIES OF CROW'S NEST."

(c) *Sense of Smell*.—Poor. I never worry as to direction of wind. One day I sat up on the ground in a bush in Bussundpur Bagh in the Kadir. The first sign of the panther was at about 9 P.M., when I heard his guts rumbling on my left in the corner of my bush. He then took ground out of sight on my left and stayed there a long time. I could hear his breathing. He came up to the goat from my front, but did not kill and gave me no shot. He went several times round my bush at varying distances. At 11 P.M. he killed, and I put an 8-bore bullet through him. In spite of being really near me for a couple of hours, this animal never smelt me. Yet last month, W., shooting with me, saw a tiger, which he afterwards killed, earnestly smelling the spot where men had been standing when they picketed the drag.

Only those wearing leather footgear should go near or picket the kill. None should go on the ground between the kill and the line of the tiger's approach.

Jungle men after putting up a machân have a habit of sitting at the foot of the tree smoking and making the ground reek for yards around.

5. SOME ESSENTIALS FOR SUCCESS: (a) Invisibility; (b) Absence of movement; (c) Silence.

(a) *Invisibility*.—Few realize the necessity for perfect screening of themselves and their machân. Many are satisfied with a species of crow's-nest erected on prominent boughs of some tree with a good leafy top. This is not enough. You must get into the heart of dense foliage and then pile up boughs and leaves until you and your machân,

sides and bottom, are invisible to the closest inspection.

Remember, you must screen below as well as at the sides. I have seen machâns bare underneath, looking perhaps like the grid on which you cook a chop but like nothing a tiger ever saw.

The higher you can get in a tree the more invisible you will be. One of the most deadly machâns I have known was one occupied by my friend W. on the occasion above referred to. The kill lay between two close-growing clumps of bamboo. The machân was in a very high tree, and the only view of the kill was obtained by parting and tying aside the thick foliage of an intervening bamboo clump. The shot was taken through the V so formed.

Do not for a moment think you can chance detection because "a tiger does not look up." This is a sheer fallacy. I have often seen tiger, both in beats and sitting up, examine trees carefully. Moreover, even if they should not look up, why should we arbitrarily limit the angle of their vision to only a few feet from the ground?

Never have sky for a background to your head. Always get a screen of leaves behind. If your head must show, put leaves in your hat. A human head looks like nothing else in the jungle.

(b) *Absence of Movement*.—This largely belongs to the preceding heading. Motion means visibility. The more slowly you move the less you are seen, whether you "still hunt" or whether you sit up. The second-hand of a watch shows up, not the minute-hand. If you must move when sitting up, move by inches and seconds. Some people

peer in all directions, shift their bodies, fidget, and scratch. Try to sit absolutely motionless.

This year I came on a freshly dragged kill, and hid behind a tree. I got one glimpse of the white front of a tigress. I moved my head several times, as sambhur feeding behind me made me nervous. Examination showed the place where the tigress had lain, and from which she watched my movements.

If you cannot stay still for long periods, lie down or sit back very gradually until you are out of sight, and then trust your ears until you are rested. Your ears will do all the work, anyhow, after dark.

But look all you can until dark. I have lost two panther who walked past a kill in daylight unseen by me until too late.

(c) *Silence*.—I have mentioned elsewhere how I lost a tiger through the scratching of a twig. Wear nothing of leather that can creak. Take off your boots and belt. Allow no food to be wrapped in paper. Metal on metal is a sure danger signal to the jungle. Eat only soft food in the machân. Try to sit still till dark. At 9 P.M. I eat a light meal and sleep or rest, having had tea on entering the machân. Food, bottles, blankets, must all be so placed that they can be picked up in the dark without noise. Allow no re-entrant twigs. I always have a strong cross-bar on which to rest my rifle. This helps aim, allows use of rifle as a pistol, and greatly facilitates the silent raising of the weapon.

6. METHOD OF TYING UP.—Always tie your animal by a rope below the knee. Stain the rope,

as well as any cut timber, with mud or cow-dung. Whether the rope should be so strong that it cannot be broken is a matter for consideration on each occasion.

In tying up for a beat the rope should always be weak, of course. A tiger is more likely to return if he has broken the rope and dragged the kill. A weak rope would therefore seem preferable. But as in my opinion one should avoid moving the kill if possible, it follows that a tree for the machân may be hard to find. The choice of such will be largely facilitated by a good electric light working up to fifty yards.

On the other hand, with an unbreakable rope the machân can be prepared before there is any kill, an undoubted advantage.

In a quiet spot, with unwary tiger, a strong rope is probably best. In other cases use a weak one. Use bark rope made on the spot.

Do not waste the tiger's time or your own in tying up old indigestible cattle.

If the kill is dragged it is absolutely essential that it should be picketed by a stained and buried rope to some adjacent root or stem, and failing that to a concealed peg. Tiger when they have come to their kill nearly always give it a lift and a pull and generally move it a few yards, often taking it much further. I have lost two tiger through non-observance of this important rule.

For shy panther you will have to use the old ruses, such as driving goats past your machân and dropping a big stone attached to the rope to anchor the goat as it passes; or men must make

a noise as they go away; and (though this does not really come under the heading of tying up) you may take a man up your machân and send him away with some noise after a time. I got a cunning panther, near the Musketry School, Pachmarhi, to come out in this way, and then missed him.

With this exception, a companion in the machân means failure, unless you have made your selection of one very wisely.

7. DISTANCE OF MACHAN FROM KILL.—The further away you are, within the effective range of your light, the better; the less the chance of being seen or heard. But always reckon that your shot may be at night. If you rely on moonlight alone, you cannot get too close. You will then hit the animals that, disregarding your proximity, do come.

Over live goats, sitting on the ground, a distance of ten to twenty feet from the tie-up gives a good view. Even at this distance one may fail. During a Meerut week I was sitting up at Hastinapur in thick cover on the edge of the jheel. A panther appeared at this short range and stared at me. I fired, but found no blood. I bicycled back to Meerut that night in pelting rain and returned with an elephant at dawn. We never found any trace of the panther, and I believe now that I made then the worst of all my many bad shots.

Roughly speaking, I look on twenty-five to thirty yards as an ideal distance when using a good lamp.

8. CHOICE OF TREE OR GROUND FOR MACHAN.

For tiger one naturally selects a tree for security. I once sat up on the ground, as mentioned elsewhere, and wounded a tiger; and when he lay roaring and tumbling just in front of me I hated it.

You cannot have a tree that is too leafy or too high. In fact a high tree will sometimes show you the enemy seated behind a bush licking his chops in fancied security.

The ground and a bush are, however, good enough for panther.

Nullahs with steep banks admit of roofed pits, which are very effective; but they are dull, stuffy, and afford a limited view. If you use these, put a lining of cloth for your roof, otherwise your clothes will be filled and your rifle may become jammed with sand.

9. SITING OF MACHAN.—I cannot repeat too often that a thick foliated tree outweighs all else.

It is a bad error to have your machân between the kill and the tiger's approach. A stupid outlying shikari lost me a tigress in this manner this year. I heard her breathing as far as my tree, and then she faded away.

On a nullah have your machân on the opposite side to the tiger's approach. Avoid having it within sound of the tiger's cover.

In 1921 I had a good tree on the edge of thick tiger cover. The tiger must have watched operations, for he growled twice in the night, but would not come out. If such a site is unavoidable, before starting work drive the tiger a quarter of a mile away by sending a couple of men to talk and cut wood.

The machân should not face the tiger's

approach. If possible, it should be sited sideways, hidden by some intervening object. If you do happen to catch the tiger's eyes, avert your own until he looks elsewhere. I am convinced that eye attracts eye.

If you have your machân looking along the length of the kill from head to rear, your light will catch the tiger full in the face. I have killed panther thus. Tiger would probably stay, but it is a severe test to impose on them.

If there is a moon, arrange so that the moonlight is on the kill and not on the machân. The moon should be behind you. There is a marked difference between the light of a moon that is against or with one.

Hilly country requires care, lest the tiger spot the machân from its own level.

Avoid loud running water. The ripple enables you to move, but it drowns the sound of the tiger.

If you are in a camp with panther round about, rig up a little seat in a tree, have a goat ready, and carry out a preparatory drill. If the panther "saws," shove on something warm and rush to your tree. The goat follows five minutes later, and the panther, with any luck, five minutes after that.

If there is no moon, tie up any hurricane lamp with a few leaves.

10. DETAILS OF MACHAN.—The chief points to attend to are invisibility and comfort.

The first has been already discussed at length. No matter how big your machân, there is no difficulty in securing this invisibility, provided you

select a thickly foliated tree and, if possible, go high up.

Comfort, to my mind, is essential for the Englishman if he is to stay quiet. He is not accustomed to, and cannot, squat like a native on his hunkers or in a ball for long; he fidgets and probably makes noises.

If you are only going to sit up a short time, make a chair seat in the ground, with a back and ample leg room, or use a stool in a tree. If sitting up all night, have a platform on which you can spread your bedding, place your kit alongside of you, and rest or sleep in comfort.

I like my machâns to have a platform of seven feet long and four feet wide. They are always made of stout saplings. All native beds creak. I have had special charpoys made with tape and stout oiled wood, but they all creaked. All charpoys, moreover, sag in the middle, and your kit gravitates beneath you.

In a machân of the size mentioned I have my bedding, pillows, and mattress. The saplings make the last necessary; and after 9 P.M. I rest or sleep, with one ear open, in comfort. In no other way can real silence be kept all night.

If you are a heavy sleeper, or snore, you must cure these horrid habits by a little will-power.

For choice let the machân be lengthways, your feet towards the kill. On the alarm you slip down your blankets, sit up, and are ready.

Do not try to command many views. You will fail to do so, and will fidget. Get one or two good views, and pile leaves high underneath and elsewhere.

I used to think I could command all sides. I sat up one day on the ground in a bush, in the angle made by an open glade which ran from the outskirts of a small wood. At the back of the bush grew an overhanging tree. I saw a panther come out at the upper narrow end of the glade. It disappeared, but I soon heard it "sawing" away somewhere quite close. None of my little peep-holes showed anything, and I was puzzled until I looked up and saw the panther on a branch straight above me. She was standing on the bough "sawing," waving her tail and watching some goats that were feeding in the open. I fired with a .577, but heard no fall. However, we got blood tracks, and found her dead after a tedious crawl on hands and knees through thorns and scrub. So much for thinking I commanded all approaches.

When you have finished your machân, put a man in it in a firing position. Walk round and see if you can detect him from the tiger's point of view. Take no unshod man with you.

I find it takes from three to four hours to build a machân, with five men.

11. ELECTRIC LIGHT.—I look on a good electric light as very necessary for successful sitting up. It enables one to be independent of the moon, and to get further from the kill than if the moon alone is relied on. I never trust the moon alone, and always supplement it with the light; moreover, in the moonlight the electric light is less noticed.

I am not going to describe my own light which I made on a jungle trip from a good electric

lamp, with various contrivances for fastening it and giving it motion in any direction.

Every one will have his own ideas as to the best lamp to use.

The points of my own light are that it

(a) Has a range, with a slightly adjustable focus, up to fifty yards.

At very close ranges, unless the light is diffused, it makes too small and brilliant a circle.

On one occasion this year I focussed as usual on the hind-quarters of a kill, but the light slipped, and the tiger found a brilliant beam on the fore-quarter beyond his nose and fled. He was close, and I used much too concentrated a light.

(b) Permits of being laid in the daylight through a peep-hole. At night this cannot be done. You can then only traverse by the beam of light itself.

(c) Can be turned in any direction without a sound, and remains there.

(d) Lights up the kill and the sights. It involves the use of no wires beyond the few feet of cable from battery to lamp. The lamp is attached to the cross-bar of machân, and works with one hand.

I bought a patent sight once with electric-lamp foresight, but it had numerous wires, and I disliked it.

These are the points of my own lamp, but I know that it is not the best that can be made.

Probably a good electric lamp over the kill

would be most efficacious. It would necessitate careful hiding and the drawback of long cables. I have shot a panther under an ordinary hurricane lantern hung up over a goat.

An advertisement of a sight to fix on the rifle has recently appeared. The beam is said to carry four hundred feet, and go where the bullet goes.

There is a Liverpool firm which advertises a big-game tripod lamp with thirty yards' extension. I know nothing of either of these, and, writing from buffalo jungles, have no opportunity of seeing them.

Whatever the light, it should be a strong one. Flash-lamp torches are too weak for my requirements.

My own lamp certainly gives a brilliant light, and I know nothing more beautiful in big-game work than this change, by the turn of a screw, from a pitch-dark night to a sudden vision of savage life in all its glory of gold, of white, and of black.

I find neither tiger nor panther are disconcerted by the light, provided always that they are allowed to get really busy eating first.

If the light is switched on before that they will not stay. If the light is not on the animal, traverse quietly until it is. If the quarry has bolted, correct your traverse, switch off, and wait.

With a lamp on the machân beware of leaves which may catch the light and, while blinding you, may make you visible by their reflection.

Dry batteries run out on every opportunity.

I know no battery that can be relied on to stand an Indian hot weather. Always carry spare bulbs. A shot by daylight is worth two by electric light. Always take a shot by daylight if you get the chance, and do not waste time over it. In such a case, whether you fire at long range or whether you let your tiger come close up, are questions that can only be decided by your knowledge of your own marksmanship, and of the ways of tiger in general and of this one in particular.

If your shot is by electric light, do not hurry; take time. Overcome the natural impulse to think the animal will bolt at once. Take a careful aim. Either the animal will stand the light and give you time, or he will be off before you could possibly have fired.

12. POINTS IN EQUIPMENT.—*Rifle v. gun*: In my opinion, a rifle or rifled shot-gun is preferable to a cylinder gun with patent bullets. Every inch of accuracy that can be obtained is needed.

Night sights should be put on before dusk. There is no objection to their being luminous. If they are not a fitting of the rifle, one may be made of a narrow strip of visiting-card, with a slit cut to accommodate the bead, and a turned-up end.

Luminous watch: Good value, but turn the face of watch to the inside of wrist.

Catapult: Useful to drive off vultures and jackal. If the former come in force it is odds against the return of the tiger; still, you may as well try.

Hyæna are a curse. Their biting noise is

undistinguishable from that of their betters and needs the light every time.

Pull-through and anti-fouling Paste: Your rifle deserves these, in the machân after your shot.

13. CONCLUSION.—This chapter has been written at length and, I fear, in boresome detail.

Yet it is only by attending to the details, and by their sum, that success in this difficult form of sport will be obtained.

For the rest, I again urge :

1. Go for a thick leafy tree and a high one.
2. Be as far from the kill as your light allows.
3. Never move a dragged kill : always picket it.
4. Use a good light.
5. Be invisible, motionless, and silent as long as you can.
6. Have a comfortable and solid machân.
7. Sit alone, unless you are sure of your companion.

CHAPTER XVII

VARIOUS NOTES

RIFLES.—Every man must choose for himself according to his experience and his strength.

For the past three years I have shot with a Tolley D.B. .470 and a .318 Westley Richards, and I ask for nothing better.

With a .470 or similar heavy rifle in his hand, a man on foot is master of the jungle. During the past two years I have hit the following game with the .470 :

2 elephant.
1 buffalo.
4 bison.
20 tiger.
2 panther.
1 sambhur.
1 nilghai.
1 blackbuck.

—
32 head.

Of these, 1 bison (hit too high up) and 2 tiger (1 hit at night and 1 a long quick shot) got away and were never recovered.

Of the others, 1 elephant, 1 buffalo, 1 bison, 2 tiger, and 1 panther travelled varying distances—from fifty yards to a quarter of a mile—from where

they were hit. None of the other animals moved from the spot where they were first hit.

The only reason for giving these figures is as a proof of the power of the .470.

It will be seen that following up was reduced to a minimum. This is an important point when shooting alone on foot. Also, and no less important, it means a minimum of pain to the animal.

Both the .470 and the .318 suffer from the curse of the H.V. rifle in that they generally give but little blood in the case of a "follow up."

I used an 8-bore paradox for years, but seldom do so now, as it is unsuited to tiger and it lacks the range of the .470.

I have found a soft-nosed split bullet for soft-skinned game, and a solid nickel bullet for the heavier species, satisfactory.

A double-barrelled rifle is essential for dangerous game on foot.

One wants two rifles, a heavy- and a light-bore. I tried a .400 for everything, and made a failure of it. One cannot combine the qualities of a racehorse and a weight-carrier.

RIFLE SIGHTS.—I believe a rifle should have two sets of sights with fine and broad bead interchangeable.

A fine bead helps long shots in the open, but for the most part when shooting in dense cover and a poor light I find a big bead a necessity.

I have shot several animals using an accurate telescope sight, but prefer the ordinary open sight for all distances, to telescope or peep sights. The least shakiness is very apparent with the telescope

sight and this is apt to put one off. Also, should the animal move off, and a running shot be necessary, one is shooting in blinkers with a telescope.

I am inclined to think some of the American sights are ahead of our own as regards illumination, but I write without personal experience.

SKINNING.—One must learn to skin really well. Few sportsmen are masters of this art. Even when the art is mastered it is sound to take out an Indian skinner if good sport is anticipated. To skin all night and shoot all day is killing work.

LANGUAGE.—Shooting out of my own country of late, I have felt more than ever how helpless one is with signs as the sole means of communication. The more the sportsman knows of the language the better will be his sport, and the more he will be in touch with local hopes, fears, and difficulties.

BOOTS.—For “still hunting” all-rubber soles of the best and softest rubber are unequalled. Next best but not so good are ordinary soles with patent rubber attachments. Rope soles are comfortable but not as silent.

MEDICAL.—One should not go on a long trip without a knowledge of how to diagnose and treat simple ailments—fever, diarrhoea, dysentery, cholera, snake-bite, and the like. The sportsman’s doctor friend will soon teach him this and also the treatment of simple fractures.

I never travel a yard in the jungle now without a little pouch on my belt containing a good lancet and permanganate of potash for snake-bite.

Esanofele, used in the Roman Campagna for fever, has been found to be an absolute specific for fever in the planting districts, and I should always take out some. A cure for one sick man costs 5 Rs., and is procurable in India now at leading chemists.

SHOOTING FOR N.C.O.'s AND MEN.—One should ever be on the look-out to try and get a shoot for the men. It is very difficult. Near certain cantonments areas are reserved for them. But generally shooting parties of N.C.O.'s and men are not welcomed by the local authorities. I am sure that with suitable arrangements and selection of good sporting men who will play the game, this difficulty can be overcome.

The N.C.O.'s and men have a dull time in India and deserve all the help we can give them. Commanding a Horse Battery, I used always to lend my men tents, make advances of money, and so on, for this purpose.

SERVANTS.—High-class servants add much to one's comfort. They increase the prestige of the sportsman, and they can help to entertain the smaller local people after these have had their interview with the master.

TENTS.—I have explained my views in Chapter V.—that is, a single-fly tent, open for the wind to blow through, with a wet grass hurdle across one end, under a real big tree.

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THE END

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